

FRONTISPIECE.



Barlow sculp.
Published as the Act directs, by C & G. Kearsley Dec^r 1st 1792.

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A N
A P P E A L
T O
THE REPRESENTATIVES
ON THE PART OF
THE PEOPLE,

RESPECTING

The present destructive state of THE GAME, and the Operative Spirit of LAWS, erroneously said to be framed for its Increase and Preservation; but experimentally tending to a speedy annihilation in every part of the Kingdom.

WITH A PREFATORY ADDRESS
T O
The Right Hon. WILLIAM PITT,
B Y
THE AUTHOR

O F
The GENTLEMAN'S STABLE DIRECTORY,

2 VOLS.

(The Eleventh Edition of which is now published)

" The Villainy you teach me, I will execute ; and it shall go hard, but
I'll better the example."

SHAKESPEARE.

L O N D O N :

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TO THE

Rt. Hon. WILLIAM PITT.

S I R,

THE unfullied confidence of your
SOVEREIGN; the gratulating plau-
dits of his PEOPLE; the dignity of
your exalted station, and the hap-
py effects of your administration,
combine to render the liberty of
thus publicly addressing you, more
than matter of common surprise

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to

to the less contemplative; who fearfully surveying the summit of Political eminence, as an inaccessible steep, view it with a consciousness of pusillanimity, and silently retreat under the imaginary influence of contemptuous indifference.

Such space of infinity being admitted (by the mass of mankind) between a PRIME MINISTER and any individual, not having the HONOR of being *personally* known, or *powerfully* recommended; and experimentally convinced, that no channel of communication is open to useful intelligence, but through
such

such gradational steps of official abstrusity, as render written remonstrance liable to interested strangulation, in its progress to the place of destination: taking also into additional consideration, the great probability of such expostulations being doomed, *if received*, (and even honored with a reading) to inevitable oblivion, I cannot but consider myself clearly exculpated from every accusation of disrespect, in submitting, through the medium of the Press, what might probably never become, *by any other means*, subject to your inspection.

Therefore Sir, under the influence of reflections that relieve my mind from every idea of impropriety or inconsistency; it will prove no matter of admiration either to you, or that very large and enlightened body of the People, whose minds are interested, and whose PLEASURES, EXERCISE and HEALTH are materially involved in the subject, upon which, (on the part of those very people) I presume to arrest your attention; that a matter of so much magnitude, (to so great and respectable a number of your fellow subjects) may undergo such FAIR, CANDID and DISPAS-

SIONATE

SIONATE discussion, as may afford opportunity to obviate some of those unforeseen difficulties, and to remove such of the accumulated obstacles, as may to the Legislature seem adequate to the universally acknowledged necessity, of reforming, (or perhaps more advantageously new modelling) LAWS, that have in their *original formation, repeated mutations, and additional restrictions*, absolutely rendered abortive, every design upon which they were said to be founded, and annually demonstrated (in the event of the various amendments) that every intentional remedy has evidently

dently increased the furor of disease. This Sir, I will safely and conscientiously venture to affirm, is a true unembellished state of the fact, to be readily corroborated by those possessing *practical knowledge* of the subject in every part of the Kingdom; what may be the affected opinion of SPECULATIVE SPORTSMEN, pursuing *their Game upon Paper*, for the investigation of the Closet, or the purposes of Parliament, it is not for me to hazard a conjecture.

I shall readily submit it, Sir, to your own decision as well as
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the opinion of the Public, whether the recent extension of the LAWS, and additional restrictions upon the PEOPLE, could have more than two prudent pleas, or predominant reasons in favour of their adoption.—The preservation of THE GAME; an increase of REVENUE, or (perhaps) the more *specious*, but still more *deceptive* expectation of both. These being admitted, as the general motives upon which those alterations were approved in Parliament, under the influence of your PATRONAGE and SUPPORT; it remains to be considered, how far the consequences

resulting from such proceedings, have sanctioned the innovation, or justified the attempt.

Such explanatory investigation is not the purport of this address, nor is it at all necessary in this early stage of the business, but is intended to be brought forward at a more proper period of introduction; leting it suffice for the present to assure you Sir, that the hope of jointly PRESERVING THE GAME and INCREASING THE REVENUE (upon the *loudly proclaimed* certainty of which the PUBLIC had been *politically* taught to fix an implicit

plicit reliance) undoubtedly rendered the GAME DUTY less reluctantly submitted to by holding forth the illusive prospect of advantages that have never existed but in imagination: neither YOU, or the EXPECTANT PUBLIC, having experienced the least gratification in *one instance*, but what has been doubly done away by reiterated and most mortifying disappointment in *the other*.

It is not my intent Sir, nor is it necessary *here*, to enlarge upon the experienced impolicy of the Tax alluded to, or the almost incredible

credible destruction of Game that *immediately* followed it; upon the broad basis of retaliation, and the inherent spirit of national opposition, to what was universally conceived an unfeeling (if not an unfair) monopoly. I can have no doubt Sir, but it must be totally unnecessary to bring to your recollection the unanimous, prudent and persevering exertions of the People of England, whenever they have had reason to suppose the RIGHTS of the CHURCH, the DIGNITY of the CROWN, or the LIBERTY of the SUBJECT in danger. The same persuasive plea of self preservation

preservation still exists, in as great
 a degree under the mild and hap-
 py Government in which we live,
 as at any former period; and tho'
 it may have been maliciously re-
 presented and ignorantly believed,
 that some malevolent malecontents
 have endeavoured to sow the seeds
 of dissention in the happiest era
 of our existence; yet the Idea in
 its most extended sense, is too ab-
 surd for even the flightest credu-
 lity to suppose, that any Man,
 or body of Men, of whatever
Party, Description, or depravity, can
 be found "BRAVE enough, or
 BASE enough," to attack or un-
 dermine

dermine a CONSTITUTION, that has for ages proved the envy of surrounding Nations, and is at this Moment the ADMIRATION OF THE WORLD.

Yet Sir, amidst this glorious exultation at our happy pre-eminence in the scale of Society, let it not be forgotten, that *every Act* issued to the People from Legislative Authority, is not directly consonant to that great body of Constituents, who so freely contribute to the exigencies of the State and who so largely and liberally assist the wheels of Government. They are, it is true,
under

under the necessity of *submitting* to such Acts as may be framed by Representatives of their own Election; but it is I flatter myself universally known, that THE LAWS upon which I presume to trouble you, are those, to the very *letter* and *spirit* of which they have originally imbibed and unanimously encouraged such an invincible aversion, that TIME aided by *refinement*, has given the root of hereditary dislike: nor do I feel the least hesitation, or fear of confutation, in assuring you, from the very best Authority, the fountain head of information, (personal

sonal communication) that they consider every link of the chain, an additional, NEW FORGED SHACKLE disgraceful to the YEOMANRY of ENGLAND. Under such mortifying reflection it may readily be conceived, (without minute description from me) what STRATAGEMS they DEVISE, what DANGER they DEFY, and what DIFFICULTIES surmount, to circumvent and evade the execution and effect of Laws, to which they acknowledge only *compulsive* obedience.

Conscious Sir, of your Political Eminence, and gladly admitting
that

that great body of general and useful knowledge so serviceable to your Country, to have been most studiously acquired and largely possessed; it is impossible, amidst such accumulation of mental excellence, to attribute to you, the least want of CANDOUR and MODERATION. Those traits of your Character, will I am unerringly persuaded, induce you to acquiesce in the generally received Truth of an axiom transmitted to us, and held invariable by the most venerable Authorities, that "PERFECTION IS NOT IN HUMAN NATURE;" under the solemnity of which position,

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I may presume to predict, that no Man living can be found sufficiently arrogant to believe himself the subject of *infallibility*. By this mode of reasoning, I humbly beg permission to shield myself from the accusation of disrespect, or intentional offence, if, whilst I am awfully beholding and bowing obedience to, every *Political* qualification and attainment, that can excite respect; I feel myself justified in exculpating you from every degree of *personal* knowledge and *practical* experience upon the SUBJECT OF THESE LAWS; for the sports of the Field having constituted

tuted no part of your Education or amusement, the world might almost as soon expect to find you *personally* engaged in a Match at NEWMARKET, as in the pursuit of a PARTRIDGE.

Availing myself therefore, of what is exceedingly clear, your having no personal interest, or pleasure in the *state of the Game*; it became a consequent matter of total indifference what Laws were enacted (whether tending to its *preservation* or *destruction*) so that the leading object, a TEMPORARY INCREASE OF REVENUE, was the *gild-*

ing, that induced the People more readily to swallow *the Pill*. Presuming on the fundamental proof of the principle advanced, I am encouraged to go farther and promulgate an opinion, which I believe I may venture to assert is likewise the opinion of every rational observer (of the changes, and alterations these Laws have undergone, during your administration); that although you may have been prevailed upon, to adopt the system and afford it your countenance, under the expectation of rendering the privilege of destroying *a Hare or Partridge*

tridge subservient to the predominant Idea of reducing the NATIONAL DEBT; yet it is plainly to be perceived, that the arrangement never originated with you, but was the *sterile* production of some one of the many hungry solicitors for Ministerial favor and protection, who totally insensible to PUBLIC CONTEMPT, feel no remorse in *frittering away* the privileges of the most industrious and most useful part of the Community; or in transferring to YOUR SHOULDERS, the odium annexed to these Laws, of all which, that have received the sanction of the Legislative body

of this Kingdom, none have proved more *repugnant to the People*. The observations you have made, and the experience you must have acquired, in an unavoidable intercourse with men of the most polished abilities, (where if Lord Chesterfield's analization of Courts is to be relied on, *natural cunning* is refined by *duplicity* and *politeness* nurtured by *disimulation*) renders it almost unnecessary for me to observe; that every Prime Minister who has preceded, and every one that follows you, will be perpetually surrounded by a swarm of NECESSITOUS SYCOPHANTS, whose *self*
Interest

Interest predominates over every *pretended* consideration for the PUBLIC GOOD. To this description of favourites Sir, (and every Man in the habits of society has favourites) you can no more declare yourself impervious than the rest of mankind; more particularly when we recollect, that some of the first Characters in history, as well as of the PRESENT AGE, have nearly fallen a sacrifice to their unfortunate attachments.

I am exceedingly well aware Sir, it may be asked, by the Advisers of these Laws, or some of

those few who avow their consistency, "If the Laws are DEFICIENT, INADEQUATE, OR OPPRESSIVE, why does not some advocate come forward, and speak the general sense of the people, in the only *proper place* for DISCUSSION and REDRESS?" To this Question, Sir, the Answer becomes both short and easy. As it is natural to conclude, no Man would acknowledge himself so servile in spirit, as to solicit a favor, where he should be certain of a refusal; so I presume no Member of the Legislature can be found, so poor in prudence, as to encounter a deliberate and inevitable

defeat

defeat, by endeavouring to alter the completion of these Laws, against the *full tide* of that Majority in Parliament, you are so eminently entitled to ; and who will beyond every obtrusion of doubt, (supported by the people at large) continue firmly attached to Measures, that have with UN-
DIMINISHED HONOR and UNSULLIED INTEGRITY, secured to the Nation its present state of unprecedented Grandeur and undisturbed tranquillity.

Thus Sir, presuming to maintain an indisputable assurance that no

mitigation of, or alteration in the present System can be obtained, or even expected, but by YOUR INTERPOSING POWER, between an *impolitic Act* and a dissatisfied People; it is from that conviction, they look up to you for the relief, so evidently excluded from *every other quarter*. Upon this ground Sir, and without a wish to avail myself of a better foundation, do I feel justified in the liberty of addressing you, as a necessary and indispensable prelude to the APPEAL, (on the part of the people), I have the honor to submit to the consideration of EVERY MEMBER
of

of both houses of Parliament, as well in his individual, as Legislative capacity. Yet Sir, under the most perfect conviction, that expostulation can have no weight without proof, I shall adduce such evidence of the *inconsistency*, the *inutility*, in fact the *absurdity* of these Laws, and the destruction they have occasioned; that I will venture to affirm (without fear of confutation), there is not a *disinterested* Man existing, who will not readily subscribe to their inefficacy, unless he is infected with a very strong spice of that FEUDAL TYRANNY, and unbounded ostentation,

ostentation, for which very many of our RUSTIC RULERS, are become so *ludicrously* conspicuous.

Here Sir, it may not prove inapplicable to apologize for any little warmth of expression, that (in the zeal of animated representation) may bear the construction of intentional irritation; on the contrary I must beg to be considered hostile to the Idea, wishing to investigate the subject with such candor and respect, as may lay claim to your consideration and indulgence; having at the same time, the ambition to regulate

late my conduct, by the model of your own Parliamentary Proceedings, adapting my matter to the importance of the object; in which attempt I feel myself confidently possessed of your acquiescence in one opinion, that *no cause* can be more entitled to energetic exertion than the CAUSE OF THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

It is in this cause, I am encouraged to advance, (what I conceive every *Free Agent* has a right to do) a PUBLIC OPINION upon a PUBLIC TRANSACTION; in doing which Sir, it will be my endeavour

your

vour, not to attract your attention *unnecessarily* from objects of greater concern, by immediately descending to a circumstantial detail of well known facts, probable inferences, and just conclusions: but content myself, with the introduction of such heads, as the present occasion renders indispensable, reserving the *minutiæ* for that body of information, I shall in the following pages, have the honor to submit to Public consideration,

Having already presumed to point out, the only two plausible, indeed *probable* reasons, that can be alleged
in

in defence of the late alterations,
 "an INCREASE of REVENUE; the
 PRESERVATION of GAME, or the
 more *specious* but still more *deceptive*
 expectation of both." It may
 perhaps be expected by the un-
 informed, or ill-advised abettors
 of such a system, that I should
 stand well prepared to prove, what
 I so confidently assert; in which
 it shall be my peculiar care, that
 they shall not become subject to
 disappointment.

In my present earnest aim at
 conviction, I am humbly induced
 to believe Sir, the following chain
 of

of corroborating circumstances, are through the track of official observation and information, perfectly recent in your recollection. The original GAME LAWS, with the variety of *additions* and *amendments* they have undergone, previous to the adoption of the restrictions, contained in the Act, commencing July the first, 1785.—The Qualifications in, and duties annexed to that Act.—The amount of Certificates at two Guineas, and Gamekeepers registry of Manorial deputations at half-a-Guinea each, for that year.—The unprecedented and incredible *nocturnal* destruction

truction that *immediately* followed; as well as the avidity and determined spirit of resentment, with which Game of all kinds is publicly transferred by purchase, not only to well known Agents in the Metropolis, but by the most notorious Poachers in every part of England.

These nocturnal and *universally* *applauded* depredations, so dreadfully reduced every distinct species of Game, in the course of three seasons; that the pursuit of it became to the FAIR SPORTSMAN, (from its *scarcity*) more an act of deliberate

deliberate unrewarded drudgery, than an object of pleasure or relaxation. The inevitable consequence of this Act, was readily foreseen by all those, *practically* experienced in the state of THE GAME, or *personally* acquainted with the newly inspired sentiments of the People; and I flatter myself Sir, it is almost unnecessary to remind you, that the GAME DUTY, (originally gratifying to the Arithmetical Ambition of its projector) has been for the *last four years* in a state of rapid reduction, proving not only by the annual falling off of Certificates, but in the registry of

of deputations *also*, the inefficacy of *any Law* not founded upon the broad basis of EQUITY, and directly tending to a general good; as well as affording additional demonstration, that LAWS originating in an *ambitious monopoly*, and *unfair exclusion*, will ever be productive of the most mortifying disappointment.

Thus Sir, the success and permanence of the Duty, having been proved entirely dependent upon the quantity and preservation of the Game, (the plenty of one, exciting a more cheerful compliance with the other); it can be no matter of

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surprise

surprise, that the Tax became *annually deficient*, in proportion as the Game *was reduced*. This probable failure, with its contingencies, having however, never been anticipated by the original projector even in Idea, some remedy became necessary to shield such system of superficial and uncertain finance, from the prying eye of a discerning Public; and it was found *truly consistent*, to obliterate the ill effect of *one* error in judgment, by the introduction of *another*: transfusing the very spirit of Trade, from the place of its nativity upon Change, to the seat of Parliament, and there enhancing

enhancing the value of GAME, by the scale of its scarcity, rating the purchase not by the probability of *acquisition*, but a more *judicious criterion*, the privilege of incessant labor and disappointment in PURSUING IT.

Upon this principle so truly paradoxical, was the additional Guinea to the former two adopted, and the Game Keeper's deputation doubled, without adverting to what was most likely to become the resulting consequence; that most prudent Men would relinquish the *humiliating Privilege* of an expensive and

laborious pursuit, when little or nothing was left to *pursue*. However Sir, as I have most willingly, and I declare conscientiously, exculpated you in my own opinion, from every share in the formation of such restrictions, (in addition to the original Laws) as have received the sanction of the Legislature; so do I farther presume to suppose, that to the surprising fertile abilities of the same theoretical financiering dependent, (who *most happily* introduced the previous duty) are the Public indebted, for an ADDITIONAL LINK of fashionable innovation, that not only circumscribes

scribes the *little remaining liberty* of the Field, and threatens the very annihilation of THE GAME: but encourages, (under popular applause and pecuniary compensation) the constant increase of Nocturnal depredators, and determined *desperate* Thieves in every part of the Kingdom.

Seeing it therefore with all its present and impending consequences, I consider it perfectly in point Sir, to represent and concisely enumerate the operative effects of the confused unintelligible combination of *legal* Permissions—Restrictions—

D 3 Qualifications

Qualifications and Contradictions as they now stand; as well as to demonstrate, how gradationally one branch, has given additional strength to another, in promoting effectually the ENTIRE DESTRUCTION of THE GAME, as if a *premium* had been fixed upon the blood of each distinct species, with a view to its total extirpation. I need not *again*, by way of enforcing these remarks, enlarge upon the perpetual and existing war, between the POWER of PARLIAMENT, and the PREJUDICE of the PEOPLE upon the subject before us; *that* being a matter so universally known and so perfectly understood,

it can require no farther corroboration. I shall consequently proceed to observe, if any thing was wanting to complete the measure of original *aversion, opposition, and disobedience* to these Laws; it was most liberally bestowed, in the Game Duty Act of 1785: an Act with no *promising prospect* in its formation, but NOTORIOUSLY DISGRACEFUL in the event. THIS DUTY was a Matter so new, so unexpected, and so singularly extraordinary in the system of Taxation, that those who were to become more materially affected, remained undecided in their determinations; during the

first emotions of surprise, at the NOVELTY of INNOVATION, LAW had its portion of influence, but too slight for long duration,—detestation was the result of deliberation, and *fear* gave place to the most *implacable resentment*. The People at large, considering this the greatest stretch of Prerogative ever aimed at their LIBERTIES, felt the cause, as the cause of an *Individual*, and the impulsive impression of REVENGE, diffused itself, by a kind of *Electrical sympathy*, through the whole chain of Society. What could not be effected by immediate exertions of POWER, it was found

found expedient to counteract by steady and persevering efforts of ART; under which patient and philosophic resignation, numbers of those, who really obtained their Certificates, took them more in determined *resentment* and *retaliation*, than OBEDIENCE to LAW. Here began (and long let it be remembered) the serious and avowed destruction of the wonderful infinity of HARES, PHEASANTS and PARTRIDGES, that have for *seven years past*, fallen sacrifices to the *inhumanity* of Reformers, that *could not, or would not* discover and adopt, a more merciful mode of finance, than

than by such dreadful carnage of Game, as threatens a total extinction of what has (FROM THE CREATION) afforded so much *pleasure* in the *Field*, and so much *food* for the *Table*.

To pursue the same strength of Argument, Sir, let me be permitted to solicit your attention to a circumstance not unworthy your observation. THE GAME (even the very permission to follow it) having, under the Authority of Parliament, become an object of *Purchase* and *Sale*; every Man taking out a Certificate became thus initiated in
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the true principle of Commerce, and feeling himself inspired with the *very spirit of Trade*, was determined to have as much as he could *for his money*, and gratefully leave PARLIAMENT as little as possible *for themselves*. In such state of general resentment, all classes were eagerly anxious to contribute to the determined event in *their own way*; while some were exulting in the diurnal success of their Guns, others were as loudly proclaiming the vigilant destruction of their Nocturnal Friends the POACHERS, by whose assistance they were enabled to purchase for all their *City Acquaintance*,

Acquaintance, for whom they publicly declared they had unlimited commissions to procure, without respect to *quantity* or *price*. Such an unfortunate combination of ill effects in constant co-operation, have at length so dreadfully reduced every species of Game, that even those prompted by *inclination*, are restrained by *Prudence* from continuing their Certificates; and I farther venture to affirm, that many of those Members, who erroneously sanctioned the system, are now by vexation and personal disappointment, (*in their pleasures*) so perfectly convinced of the impolicy of those Acts, that they

they look forward with eager expectation, to the *Time*, when a TOTAL REPEAL may be found a matter of POLITICAL NECESSITY.

That necessity Sir, I presume can never be more fully justified, than by once more adverting retrospectively, to the insufficiency of these Laws, to promote the ends, for which they were said (or supposed) to be formed; on the contrary, it is amongst the YEOMANRY, and their extensive connections universally known, that the *very act* upon which I have already enlarged (with its intended spirit of superrogation
in

in the *additional duty*) has so increased the original antipathy, that every clause, every proscription, every pain and every penalty, is an occasional subject of POPULAR EXECRATION. In fact Sir, Game Certificates are held in such indifference, that men of all distinctions, nay the most inferior classes, (particularly remote from *stately mansions*) pursue their sport (barren as it now is) without seeming to feel the least necessity for such compulsive privilege; confidently opposing the danger of *persecution* and *prosecution*, as the most effectual method of displaying their INEFFABLE CONTEMPT.

I flatter myself possessed of your coincidence with me in an opinion, that Laws are certainly the most popular, and consequently the most equitable, where a prompt obedience, precludes the necessity of penal exaction. If this is admitted a Political Fact, how *truly inefficacious*, how PERFECTLY CONTEMPTIBLE may those be considered, that are *eternally* transgressed with impunity; and those transgressions not by device or stratagem, under the cloak of *nocturnal darkness*, but fairly, unequivocally in the OPEN DAY, without the least *dread of information*, or *fear of punishment*. In
short

short Sir, to this state of unprecedented degradation are the Game Laws reduced, and must ever continue, unless the Parliament will undertake to GENERATE a Race of *informers*, for their own particular purpose; as no Premium, no encouragement, no promises, or threats, can procure *inferior instruments*, to assist in enforcing Laws, universally condemned as unworthy the DIGNITY OF THE CROWN, and disgusting to the People. If Sir, it is possible for you to doubt an assertion made under the influence of personal experience, and the solemn impression of Truth; let me

me be permitted to add ONE RECENT INSTANCE within the extensive circle of my own Friends, as a confirmation for the whole. Where a Gentleman of very large Fortune, and no small share of local popularity, absolutely canvassed the whole Parish to procure *an informer*, that he might become (himself) the convicting evidence. But to the IMMORTAL HONOR of the spot, (and it should not only for ever be recorded, but held as sacred as the TEMPLE OF LIBERTY) not even an *unpolished Rustic* could be found so destitute OF HONOR, as to render himself accessory to A PERVERSION OF
E RIGHT,

RIGHT, in a *fellow subject*, that he felt himself equally entitled to.

At this recital Sir, permit me one moment to *apostrophize*, merely to introduce an *interjection*, and lament the degeneracy of the Times to prompt, and error in judgment to permit, the institution of A LAW in the BRITISH SENATE, merely to trumpet forth (in every corner of the Kingdom) its own *imbecility*. This imbecility is so consistently uniform, through every part of the whole, that I defy any man, or body of men whatever, to construct a fabric of greater contrarieties;
formed

formed in *error*, and continued in *obstinacy*, they could only be expected to terminate in CONTEMPT. That contempt has arisen from the just and honest indignation every rational observer feels, when calmly and impartially looking into the (eternally accumulating) Code of *Penal Statutes*; he finds one acting in letter and spirit, diametrically opposite to others then existing. The case in Point is absolutely the Law before us, which forbids the execution of a Crime, under certain Punishments in *one part*; and then deceptively courts a transgression of *that very Act*, by a conditional

ditional duplicity of absolution *in another*. To explain this more at length, it is not necessary to go into the various contradictory clauses of *each act*, the accusation is sufficiently proved by the indefinite terms of the *last only*; in which, *any one Person*, is permitted to obtain a Certificate as well *as another*, without at all adverting to the Qualifications, so particularly specified in former Acts, which remain unrepealed. If this was not intended, as a political permission, (or attractive encouragement) for every Person to transgress the former Law, and kill Game merely for the sake of his

his pecuniary contribution; why not have wiped away the ambiguous deception, and fairly expressed in the Preamble, that no Person but such as are *already* qualified, shall be permitted to obtain a Certificate? This Sir, would have inevitably shut the door that is now open to imposition; the PEER and the *Cobler* would not have met in the same field uncertain of each other's privilege; the QUALIFIED would have been publicly known from the *unqualified*; and this distinction would have finally confirmed the former Laws, and explained the new: but in its present complicated state of in-

consistencies, some of all descriptions (the Qualified *without* a Certificate, and the unqualified *with*) set both INFORMERS and MAGISTRATES at equal defiance; while the GAME DUTY list (contracted as it now is) becomes remarkable only for the names of Mechanics of every description, who from FEAR, or POLICY, think it necessary to pay that compliment of *Adulation* to their OPULENT NEIGHBOURS, some of whom, *most probably*, assisted in framing the Law.

Amidst such an infinity of Truths, the field is sufficiently extensive to
increase

increase my remarks, or to enlarge upon those already introduced. But Sir, as you constitute a part of that awful Tribunal, to whom a more minute exposition of Facts will be particularly addressed; I feel it by no means inapplicable to conclude, with an Assurance, that the POPULARITY you have so justly and universally acquired by a voluntary repeal of some Taxes, and reduction of others, (equally severe upon that part of the community least able to bear them) has taught those most interested in these Laws, and influenced by their effects, to implicitly look up to

YOU, for such similar exertion of
DISINTERESTED PATRIOTISM, as may
render THE GAME no longer an
unworthy object, of *more unworthy*
Jealousy, between the POWER OF
PARLIAMENT and the PRIVILEGE
OF THE PEOPLE. In such joint
hope and earnest expectation,

I have the honor to subscribe
myself,

S I R,

Your most obedient

And very humble Servant,

The AUTHOR.

TO

T H E P U B L I C.

AMIDST the voluminous accumulation of Penal Statutes for the preservation of property, and the support of Society; there are perhaps, none so universally execrated, or so notoriously ineffectual, as the Laws upon the subject now before us. It is almost unnecessary to observe, that the article of GAME, too trifling in itself for PARLIAMENTARY CONSIDERATION, has, by the impolitic and tyrannic exertions of former Parliaments, been raised to a degree of *imaginary estimation*, hardly to be believed in the cooler moments
of

of retrospective rumination; but now more fully confirmed, under the *fostering Care* and *condescending auspices* of an Administration, holding forth temptation too *degrading* for the SERVANTS OF THE CROWN to offer; too *humiliating* for the SUBJECT to accept.

Though of no intrinsic worth, ancient FEUDAL DIGNITY, and modern PARLIAMENTARY PROSCRIPTION have rendered the Article of Game, productive of more *disquiet, popular discontent* and *local animosity*, than any other law ever established in this Kingdom. It is totally unnecessary for me to point out; every Man's memory and daily observation will furnish him, not only with numerous personal disputes and inveterate animosities among the most opulent of his neighbours, but various instances of an existing war between the LORDLY POSSESSOR of the VILLAGE MANSION and his *rustic dependents*;

as striking specimens of the happy effects of Laws, erroneously supposed or pretended to increase the Revenue and preserve the Game,

That Laws so truly HETEROGENEOUS in *design* and *effect*, should have been framed under a Government so mild, and a People so enlightened, has ever been matter of admiration; that their predicted PAINS, PENALTIES and PERSECUTIONS should have proved abortive, is equally cause of GENERAL EXULTATION. How the spirit of these Laws, (exciting the resentment and opposition of the people) has operated to the humiliating deception of the *Financier*, and the INCREDIBLE DESTRUCTION OF GAME, it will be the business of future pages to explain; leting it suffice for the present to observe, if our Predecessors of only half a Century back, (who so *loudly* and *largely* boasted of BRITISH LIBERTY) would have contemptuously
spurned

at the very Idea of *wearing a Hat*, or *drawing on a Glove* upon MINISTERIAL COMPULSION, what must have been their mortification, could they have been told that the time of degradation was approaching, when the Revenue of BRITAIN, in the very zenith of her Glory, (and when exultingly declared to be paying off A MILLION A YEAR OF HER NATIONAL DEBT) should condescend to draw a paltry additional resource, from the precarious pursuit of an harmless inoffensive Pheasant, Hare or Partridge: a species of Taxation so evidently deceptive, that it must unavoidably diminish, in proportion as the Game is eventually destroyed.

However the contemptuous sensation, arising from reflection, upon the *inconsistency* and *absurdity* of the system, may tempt us to refine upon parallels between Laws that *are bad* and those that ARE WORSE; comparing

paring such as add splendor to the dignity of the Crown, and insure the confidence of the People, with those that *debase* the one and *degrade* the other. I shall confine myself to a very few remarks in justification of an opinion promulgated in my prefatory address to the Premier, that Laws are certainly the *most popular*, and consequently the *most equitable*, where a PROMPT OBEDIENCE precludes the necessity of *penal exaction*. That this position may be pursued to instant conviction, let it be *impartially* asked, and as *candidly* answered, whether any other three imposts in the very long chain of Legislative Taxation, have so clearly demonstrated their own imbecility, as those just alluded to? Or, whether there are any so eventually oppressive, so ineffectual, so repugnant to the will of the People, or so disgraceful to that Constitution we have been almost impulsively taught

taught to idolize, as a most glorious pattern
of DEMOCRATIC PERFECTION?

I believe I may very safely, on the part of that Public I presume to address, venture to affirm, there are few, if any, so obstinately hardy, as to deny the torrent of popular impression and invincible prejudice, against those Acts from which I draw my inference; and those alone are introduced, merely to form the comparison I have already announced of putting Laws that are *partially effectual* in competition with others that have *no effect at all*, unless in totally defeating the *very ends* which they were formed to promote. If there are some, whose official departments, render their organs of credulity impervious to the most demonstrative facts; to their remembrance alone, I beg to refer them, for sufficient proof of the firm resistance to, and non-compliance with the Letter

ter of the Law, in *every case* where the basis of such Law, has not been in direct conformity with the PRINCIPLE OF EQUITY, and in strict unison with the INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE.

It is not my present purpose, nor is it indeed my wish, to investigate or enter into, a tedious disquisition upon the dangers likely to arise from the late unprecedented extension of the EXCISE LAWS, or the rapidly increasing power of the STAMP OFFICE; enough has been already said *by others* upon those subjects, and perhaps it might in some respects have been better, if less occasion had been given, for such *bold* and *repeated* remonstrances, through the medium of the Press. I shall however presume to re-echo the general sense of the Nation, upon the Taxes I have introduced for observation, as more immediately applicable to my purpose of conviction,

conviction, and in the true spirit of argumentative zeal venture to affirm; that none but *Ministerial dependents, Placemen, Pensioners, Servile Solicitants* of Office and the *most pusillanimous of the people*, ever sullied the Crowns of their heads, or branded their hands, with a *stamp of contamination*; in such perfect contempt has been held the HAT and GLOVE TAX, both or either of which, the utmost severity has never been able to impose *with effect*. In confirmation of a Fact so universally known and exulted in, a thousand instances might be adduced, but one corroborating and *well known proof* only will be necessary to shew the contemptuous resentment of every individual to LAWS, I pronounce to be *bad*, for the express purpose of candidly comparing with those that are *worse*.

To enforce a compliance with these unpopular Taxes, it must be recent in the memory

mory of every observer, what a NEST OF INFORMERS ripe for iniquity, (acting under *whose auspices*, by *what instructions*, or in hopes of what PROMISED REWARD for *secret services* it is not for us to determine) were let loose upon society in different parts of the Kingdom; how they succeeded in their attempts; how *largely* they executed their commissions; and how *pantomimically* they escaped (WITH THEIR LIVES) from the various cities and towns, of their *official embarkation in business*, has been already described in almost every periodical print in the Kingdom. From this incontrovertible criterion of contempt, we may be fairly entitled to infer, that such Laws were too futile in their formation, to insure either PERMANENCE OR RESPECTABILITY; and in that state of sterility, it can create no surprise, that *spontaneous Agents* did not spring up (as expected) though *Politically lured* with “HALF THE

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PENALTY

PENALTY INCURRED," so attractingly held out by the liberality of the Minister and his Majority in Parliament.

Here from an inference fairly drawn, may be formed an undeniable conclusion. If these Laws are so justly loaded with POPULAR OPPROBRIUM, that no man, or set of Men, will come forward to support and enforce so WRETCHED A SYSTEM OF TAXATION, even under sanction of Parliamentary Protection, with a premium of *half the penalty*; what terms can be found sufficiently expressive of the utter contempt and abhorrence of the GAME LAWS, where (to the immortal honor of the present age be it recorded) no one necessitous Man can be found, under the INFLUENCE OF POWER, the ART OF PERSUASION, the FEAR OF THREATS, or HOPE OF REWARD, to come forward in what he conceives the *infamous character of an informer*

mer (amidst ten thousand transgressions notoriously public) though the high founding Authority of the *Act itself* promises him the "whole of the Penalty," (FIVE AND TWENTY POUNDS) as a Parliamentary *douceur* for his *intrepidity*.

Here let me be permitted to indulge the effusions of sympathy, in the spirit of congratulation to every fair and honorable Sportsman in the Kingdom, upon such DISINTERESTED PATRIOTISM—PURE PHILANTHROPY—UNSULLIED INTEGRITY, and NATIONAL UNANIMITY. May it be for ever handed down to Posterity, as one vital spark of our CHARACTERISTIC LIBERTY not yet extinguished; and transmitted to after ages, with the MAGNANIMITY of those MAGISTRATES, who nobly stemming the Torrent of *Ministerial influence*, dared to step forth in defence of the People, and banish the race

of *Stamp Informers* from their several districts as PESTS TO SOCIETY.

Previous to conclusion, it was my design to have made known my intention of fairly demonstrating the Annual decrease of the CERTIFICATE TAX, with the rapid destruction and threatened *annihilation* of THE GAME; not under the probable accusation of false reasoning, hypothesis, or conjecture, but by *proofs* beyond the power of Sophistry to confute, or PREJUDICE to condemn. PROOFS, from Authority no less respectable, than the receipts of Office. But it should seem that I am in some degree anticipated in the corroboration of this Fact, by the following *Paragraph*, that now lays before me, in the COUNTY PAPER of yesterday's publication.

“It is said that GOVERNMENT intend this year to give instructions to the OFFICERS OF
EXCISE,

EXCISE, and *other Persons officially employed* by them within the different Counties, to take notice of those Persons, who *shoot without* the proper LEGAL CERTIFICATE, and to transmit their names to the COMMISSIONERS of THE STAMP OFFICE. This step we hear is become the *more necessary*, by reason of the Certificate Act not having been so productive last year, as in the preceding ones."

Upon the letter and spirit of which Political threat, I shall not *at present* presume to make a single comment ; leaving it entirely to the most impartial of that Public, I have the honor to address, to form their own conclusions, from *what motive*, under *what Authority*, *whose instructions*, or for *what purpose* it obtained TERRIFIC insertion.

A N
A P P E A L
T O T H E
R E P R E S E N T A T I V E S .

My Lords and Gentlemen,

T H E dissenting power so judiciously lodged, by the wisdom of our Ancestors, in the ARISTOCRATIC branch of BRITISH LEGISLATION, (constituting its members the HEREDITARY GUARDIANS of our *rights* and *privileges*) will I flatter myself sufficiently exculpate me from the unjust accusation of irreverence, in presuming to address my remonstrance to every

individual of both houses of Parliament, under the general appellation of THE REPRESENTATIVES of the PEOPLE.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Conscious that those Representatives, can only *eventually* derive their domestic felicity, local influence, preservation of property, and joint national importance, from the SUPPORT, SPIRIT, and UNANIMOUS SUFFRAGES of the People; I feel myself fully justified in reiterating the complaints and *universal discontent* of the Public at large, (upon the subject of THE GAME LAWS) as the proportional exertion of an individual for the promotion of *a general good*. And however lightly the representation of *an individual*, may be estimated in the scale of Legislative dignity; it may be remembered, that to a *single* opinion may be attributed (in their origin) some of the greatest changes and reformatations that
ever

ever occurred in the immense volume of human Transactions. MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN, That the privilege of respectfully submitting the sentiments of the people to your Legislative consideration by an individual, may be embraced with FREEDOM, and pursued with PROPRIETY ; I must be permitted to avail myself of one occasional recommendation to your remembrance ; that most probably to a *very slender* circumstance of GOOD FORTUNE, the *fluctuating favor* of a SOVEREIGN, the *illusive smile* of a MINISTER, the *infatuating folly* of the TIMES, (or some one concurring "flow in the tide of mens' affairs," so admirably described by our immortal bard) LORDS of *every description* stand indebted for their claim to appearance in the Assemblage of Nobility. This once admitted it must necessarily follow, that the *decisive voice* of an illiterate intoxicated Mechanic, has frequently and *luckily* raised many of the lower house, from the rustic

tic obscurity of a *Village Mansion*, to the honor of a seat in the NATIONAL CONVENTION. Under this gradational definition of *local honor* and *free Agency*, I am induced to hope, no well founded objection can arise, to my endeavouring (on the part of the people) to *explain, explode, and obliterate* LAWS, that have so evidently failed in every intent for which they were formed.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

When we advert to that infinity of ADDRESSES, PETITIONS, INSTRUCTIONS and REMONSTRANCES, for which the people of England, are so *truly remarkable* and so *greatly ridiculous*; I can entertain no doubt but you will perfectly coincide with me in opinion, that such *temporary furor*, whenever it presents itself, is not the spontaneous effusions of the people, with whom it is said, and superficially supposed

supposed to originate, but the political effort of some *ministerial minion*, or *quondam patriot*, who possessing the requisites for PUBLIC PROSTITUTION successfully generates a delusion so palpable and so deceptive. If then, My Lords and Gentlemen, the dignity of Parliament has been so repeatedly attacked, and its wisdom warped by the insidious designs of either PARTY, or *Prejudice*; what may not be hoped and expected, from your most candid deliberations, upon the disinterested representation of Facts *too true to be doubted, too notorious to be denied*. Unawed by POWER, uninfluenced by FEAR, possessing no PLACE, expecting no PREFERMENT, not circumscribed in the latitude of Association, but in occasional and constant intercourse with the PEER, the COMMONER, and the PEASANT; I may be permitted to say, it is from the pen of *such universality*, that the unsullied information
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of TRUTH is to be derived, and not from the *Sophistical* declamation of A MINISTER, or the equally *fallacious* and *self interested* protestations of his *opponent*.

Thus prepared for the investigation of this elaborate accumulation of Parliamentary Oppression, in the exclusive monopoly of one of the most universal dispensations of Providence; it becomes the only matter of difficulty to decide, what *part* of the *whole* superstructure, has been rejected by an *indignant Public*, with the most SOVEREIGN CONTEMPT. For during a personal experience, and accurate observation of more than twenty years, in an (UNQUALIFIED) enjoyment of every Gratification the pleasures of the Field could bestow; I have never been able to discover (amidst a most extensive circle and connection in various Counties) the least fear of *information, prosecution, pain, penalty,*

ty, or *imprisonment*. Feeling it unnecessary to go into the descriptive FOLLY, IMPOLICY, or INCONSISTENCY, of the *old* Laws, (which are still the ground-work of the *new*) as applicable to the present purpose; it will prove sufficient to observe, they were always considered an indelible stigma to what is *ludicrously* termed the LAND OF LIBERTY, and as no laws were ever more GENERALLY DESPISED, it cannot create momentary surprise that they were ever notoriously deficient in effect. Experimentally convinced of the inattention to, and non-compliance with the penal letter of the *old* Laws, I had less to expect from the *intentional* OPERATIVE SPIRIT of the NEW. Despicable in principle, they have proved doubly despicable in their consequence; for "necessity is so truly (and universally acknowledged) the mother of invention," and POWER so industriously counteracted by *cunning*, from the COURT to the Cottage, that every

every additional restriction to these impolitic Laws respecting the Game, has as constantly increased the number of its inveterate enemies, and proportionally expedited the impending period of its annihilation.

I say with greater confidence "*period of its annihilation.*" because every rational sportsman, every disinterested observer sees with concern, the various means of devastation in perpetual practice, tending inevitably to a certain extinction of every species of Game; at least out of those limits precautionously guarded by * *Spring Guns, Man Traps*, and such other engines of human destruction, as have been already so *charitably* and *notoriously* called in to *assist, strengthen* and *enforce* a compliance with LAWS, to which the PUBLIC acknowledge *no submission*, owe *no obedience*. My Lords and Gentle-
men,

* Lord B——, at C. B.

men, (without adverting more by expatiation, to the dreadful act of Bloodshed in defence of a *Hare* or *Pheasant*, just alluded to) experience individually and collectively must have long since convinced you, that rivetted and linked down as the people are by the chain of NEW MADE LORDS AND LAWS, they still possess instinctive Pride and Fortitude sufficient to repel *Tyranny* by *Stratagem*, and procure a much greater portion of "the forbidden fruit," from the invincible spirit of resentment only, than would be destroyed, or *even sought after*, was Parliament to relax in its monopoly and become less severe in its restrictions upon that head.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Eminent as your situations are, plausible your collected informations, and Theoretical your conclusions; I can have no hesitation

sitation in pronouncing this subject to be less generally understood in the Senate, than any other that ever came before you for national disquisition. But that I may avoid the suspicion of even unintentional disrespect, I beg to explain by presuming to observe, that POLITICS and POACHING have their different *points, attractions and qualifications*; and although I can most readily admit the greater part of you to be *strictly political*, I can as willingly shield you from any proficiency in the latter: your Predecessors (in Parliament) having assumed to themselves that exclusive merit, by the formation of laws calculated to prove its necessity and promote its success.

Genuine and authentic information is not to be obtained from Ministerial misrepresentation, (originally derived from the Ambition of interested individuals) but from
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the parties who are immediately concerned, and feel themselves sensibly aggrieved; such there are in every part of the Kingdom, who do, with the true inherent spirit of their ancestors, effect a consolatory redress of grievances, personally procuring *by Art and nocturnal connivance*, what neither the wisdom of Parliament can *counteract*, or its *power, prevent*. Experience, that steady touchstone of TRUTH, has long since demonstrated the impossibility of increasing or preserving the breed of Game by means of compulsion; the lower, nay, *the very lowest class* take and destroy more than double YOUR proportions, in direct opposition to the utmost rigidity of your Laws; it is therefore evident, your own advantages would arise from making a merit of Necessity, and giving a liberal unequivocal consent, to what all the boasted AUTHORITY of PARLIAMENT can *never restrain*.

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My Lords and Gentlemen, I have already observed in my "prefatory address," and the following introductory pages "TO THE PUBLIC," that these Laws are held in *so much detestation*, that an INFORMER would in general estimation be considered a pest to society; and in this progressive stage of the business, I claim the privilege of going somewhat farther in justification to assure you, that were it possible nature could descend to such an incredible state of national degeneracy, and characters could be selected, willing (for a paltry pecuniary consideration) to be branded with the indelible Stigma of *Informer*, the Country Magistrates are by far too respectable, and too much respected, to run the hazard of GENERAL OPPROBRIUM by enforcing them. And here it becomes by no means inapplicable to repeat the great difficulty of procuring an Informer, even under *magisterial dictation*;
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some small spark of genuine worth is frequently retained in even the lowest characters, and the very Rustic who follows the Plough, is too innately honest, to make his neighbour liable to the payment of a penalty, for the enjoyment of what he considers himself *justly* and *equally* entitled to.

In this spirited opinion, the long lists of Acts, Clauses, Amendments, Qualifications, Informations, Persecutions, Prosecutions, Pains and Penalties, prove defective, merely because no set of men can be found sufficiently abandoned in principle to give them their support. The ancient and invincible impulse of opposition on one part, will ever destroy the intentional effect of arbitrary legislation on the other; nor will any conditions or injunctions from a superior power be implicitly submitted to *in this country*, where EQUITY does not constitute the fun-

damental part of such compulsory contract. To all acts of the Legislative Body, passed into laws, the people have submitted with less signs of discontent than to any one *Act* or *Amendment* respecting THE GAME. In all others, a general and proportional contribution, or submission, has been demanded on the part of Parliament, and acquiesced in by its constituents; but in respect to Game, the partial proscription has destroyed every shadow of confidence, and for years produced the hostile declaration of destruction, vindicated by the Laws of Retaliation and Self Preservation.

My Lords and Gentlemen, the reason I flatter myself is plain and self evident; so long as a Man is called upon for whatever may be adequate to his own possessions, equivalent to the affluence of his neighbour, and necessary for the exigencies of state and support

port of Government, so long he contributes his proportion without repining; but he no sooner perceives the Affluence of *that* Neighbour, put *him* in possession of "a common benefit of Nature," that he is *personally* and *totally* deprived of, than REASON and EQUITY resume their proper aspect, shake off the shackles of Tyranny assuming the appellation of Law, and he endeavours by every means ambition and well founded resentment can invent to *do himself* that JUSTICE the boasted laws of his Country have deprived him of.

These truths shall be supported by a series of facts, that no Parliamentary *finesse*, syllogistic *reasoning*, or logical *definition* can disprove, or weaken. To give them their proper and just weight in the scale of demonstration, it will be first necessary to draw a line of comparison, in respect to numbers,

between the enemies to these laws, and the advocates for enforcing them; when the proportion and superiority will, in all probability be found something similar to a comparison between the formidable phalanx of Xerxes, and the ragged followers of Falstaff.

Upon the criterion and affected wisdom of the landed qualification to kill Game, as fixed by *former* Parliaments, I shall presume to observe; that nine tenths of those *fortunately* so qualified, may be strenuous advocates for the support and continuance of the laws in their *present form*, as it undoubtedly affords a pleasing incense to vanity, in displaying a superiority over another, whose adverse fortune has left him a few Pounds short of equal privilege. Here the jealousy is excited, that constitutes the very basis and ground work of all the destructive ills
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that follow from emulative imitation, and the pleasing prospect of certain and inevitable revenge. In this shameful and contemptuous distinction is included a very numerous class of respectable Freeholders, who with their Relatives, friends and adherents, form no inconsiderable part of the people. They all feel the oppressive injunction, and publicly avow their determined resolution to become partakers of what providence so *liberally* supplied, but PARLIAMENT has so *prudently* taken away.

In direct gradational observation, I must be permitted to point out the impolitic insult offered to the most oppressed, though not the least numerous class, who are affected by the subject under investigation. In this discrimination, I take the liberty to introduce to your commiseration, all degrees of Landholders, who are *renters only*, from fifty

to a thousand pounds per Annum, in every part of the Kingdom. Take only an imaginary survey of these, and you behold a host of inveterately professed and powerful enemies to your *Balloon* built establishment for the increase and preservation of Game; and here it is almost unnecessary for me to add, that a little reflection in respect to these people, displays an instance of *Tyranny* and *Despotism* not to be exceeded under any *Monarchial Government* in Europe.

That an assertion so *bold*, and at the same time so *just* may be fairly verified, let me hold forth to public *view* and *contempt* a most striking instance of parliamentary ingratitude.—These people whose friendly assistance is found indispensibly necessary to increase the breed and promote the preservation of the Game, (whose industry in the cultivation of your lands, and punctuality
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in the payment of your rents, form the central and fundamental part of all your greatness) are prevented from enjoying one hour's relaxation from Labor in the pursuit of Game upon their *own high rented* premises; though a perfect stranger (said only to be) possessed of *one hundred a year* at *two hundred* miles distance, may pursue and destroy that very Game, and break down the fences, not only with impunity, but even under the protection of Laws disgraceful to the British Constitution.

“O Shame! where is thy blush?” EQUITY revolts at the iniquitous distinction, and compels the *impartial observer* to feel and resent the injury as his own. My Lords and Gentlemen, can it be possible, that amidst your numbers, and in the present enlightened age of refinement, no one can be found so little attached to his own hereditary

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tary consequence, and love of power ; as to embark in the cause of THE PEOPLE, and propose the abolition of laws, that tend to destroy the boasted freedom of our Constitution, and the *little remaining* liberty of the subject.

The warmth of expression must be excused : the cause requires it. TRUTH may do much, openness to conviction more ; therefore accept this exhortation *from truth* : if the Game is an object worthy your attention, let such attention be blended with liberality. The friendship of the Farmers must be acquired in preference to every other consideration ; for divested of their support and assistance, all your *threats, laws, penalties* and *persecutions* become not only ineffectual, but well known subjects of CONTEMPT and RIDICULE. For let it be understood, that although the Farmer is an
 enemy

enemy to your laws, he is not an enemy to the preservation of the Game, or your gratification in the pursuit of it, from selfish or interested motives: No! he regards it with *indifference*, in respect to the GAME ITSELF; nor would one in twenty of the Farmers, be at the trouble to kill, or the expence of bringing it to his Table. But the dictates of nature must be obeyed; his resentment is proportioned to the *severity*, (to the *ingratitude*) of your injunctions, and he not only very judiciously declines the protection, but silently and exultingly acquiesces in the perpetual destruction of what he thinks he is *ostentatiously, cruelly and unjustly* prevented from becoming an honorable and public partaker of; wrapping himself up in the warm and happy transposition of Shylock's exclamation most admirably adapted to the unprecedented liberality of the occasion.

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“ The Villainy you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard, but I'll *better* the example. ”

From the pleasing and satisfactory sensation of Gratitude, the very labourer is infected with the sympathetic passion of *Revenge*, and during the season of *hay-making* and *harvest*, makes a merit of universal destruction, because the *wisdom*, the *prudence*, the undefiled purity of Parliament, has refused *his Master* a small proportion of the produce of his own high rented premises. Is there a friend to *honor*, *justice*, *equity* or *truth*, who can withhold the tribute of applause from the Farmer for his honest resentment, or the Servant for his unshaken fidelity ?

After venturing to assure you, these are the genuine and invariable sentiments of the parties described; repeatedly collected from their personal declarations, and not the effect of party spirit, or capricious fancy, I shall

shall presume to offer a few observations upon the conduct of a party, that in the embryo of your imaginations are considered the most important of your opponents; though I have not the least doubt but time, reflection and a thorough unbiassed investigation of the subject, will lead you to a full conviction, that of all classes, they have been the least injurious to the cause in question. For I must be permitted to declare, if the Game never suffered greater destruction, than from the deadly level of the Gun of the fair Sportsman in the field, *qualified* or *unqualified*, no act of yours would be requisite for its preservation.

My Lords and Gentlemen, If I may for a moment be permitted to believe, there are some few members of both Houses, who have a practical knowledge of this subject, to them I wish to address my argument, in preference

ence to the eye or ear of prejudice opposed to matter of Fact. To Gunners without a landed qualification, great part of the disasters that befall the Game, have been unjustly and indiscriminately attributed, but with what propriety let circumstances explain. The Requisites to form a complete and *destructive* Sportsman for the season are many; for instance, great strength of constitution to encounter the difficulties of fatigue and inclemency of weather; Dogs excellent in their different kinds; as well as a complicated minutiae known only to the sporting world, to constitute what is technically called "*a good shot.*" Two of the three are rarely found in possession of the same person; the whole *seldom* or *ever*. The Gunners who are thus amazingly multiplied in *Theory*, vanish in practical observation to *a very few*; and among those many, who are precluded the pleasure of having a brace of birds

birds in possession from their *own guns*, at any one time in the course of the season, though unluckily attached to the sport, and make a great show of *killing*, by being in the constant pursuit of it.

From this class, not sufficiently tremendous *in action* to rouse the fears or indignation of a Parliament anxious for the safety of so NATIONAL an object, I shall make an easy transition to that more formidable combination, against which, it might with strict propriety, have planted the full force of its artillery, thereby conciliating the affection and assistance of all parties interested in the event. It may be naturally concluded that the combination I allude to, is the incredible number of POACHING *desperados* infesting every part of the Kingdom. This numerous and destructive body, unchecked by law, unawed by influence, and powerfully supported

supported by *public contribution* in opposition to your Rigidity, annually kill and dispose of, double (nay treble) the quantity of Game destroyed by *every other* means whatever. I shall not enlarge on the engines of nocturnal destruction so universally known in description; but revert to the number and consequence of their abettors, including all parties, and of all denominations, who consider themselves aggrieved by the abuse of Power displayed in the cruelty and oppression of the Game Laws.

These, as before enumerated, form a most incredible proportion of the people at large, who will go every length that severity and retaliation can justify, to gratify, or satiate an unlimited resentment. They are not only exceedingly numerous, but opulently powerful; and consist of all those (without exception) in cities, towns and the Metropolis

polis, who being prevented from the procuration of Game, by the present construction of Law, become voluntary purchasers of what the market *has been* so plentifully supplied with; and the Merchant, Innkeeper and Mechanic, agree for Pheasant, Hare or Partridge, with nearly as little secrecy, as for a joint of meat in the public shambles.

My Lords and Gentlemen, if you have not fixed an unalterable determination to remain obstinately or *politically* deaf to the interposition of facts, and every species of reform; let me (in the behalf of every real sportsman, whose frame has experienced that electrical vibration, sympathetically produced by the wonderfully instinctive inspiring attitude of the Pointer; the determined irresistible speed of the Greyhound, the joyous crack of the Spaniel, or the more noble burst of the enlivening Pack) intreat you

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to pay some respect to circumstances, that by your superior situations in life you are prevented being privy to. If you must still indulge doubts of its authenticity, let me advance in my assertions and declare, I have for many years seen the very *Manufacture* of Game carried on in a more than *wholesale manner*; and been witness to a waiter's display of SEVEN BRACE OF HARES (from one sack) of all which, the choice was offered for three shillings, or three and sixpence each, in proportion to their size and appearance. Nay I have seen a common Stage Waggoner, offer *almost publicly*, upon the road between Salisbury and London, *fifteen brace of birds*, at two shillings a brace, four days *before* the commencement of the season.

Without entering into a tedious detail of the infinite, powerful and incontrovertible
proofs

proofs of the contempt of the People at large to these Laws, within my own knowledge in so many years experience; I shall presume only to obtrude *another single instance* upon your attention, and then proceed to a few farther remarks upon the practice in its more extended complication. A Carrier arrived with his Horse and Cart, in the dusk of the evening, at the entrance to Leadenhall Market, in which resided the Person to whom his load was to be *privately delivered*, but upon searching his pockets for instructions respecting the consignment, to his utter astonishment and inexpressible mortification, such indispensable document was not to be found, but was evidently lost in the journey. To attempt a recovery was vain, in a dilemma so truly distressing, without a Confidant to consult, or a Friend to assist, he felt himself (in such state of despondency) under the necessity of appealing to

the uncertain liberality of a Stranger; for after parading the pavement in alternate turns, (and a state of perturbation better conceived than described) for near two hours, *weary in body, dejected in mind*, a horse jaded with his journey, and fearful of adventuring his lading in the yard of an inferior Inn to which he was destined; He tremblingly entered a Public House in the Neighbourhood, solicited secrecy from the Landlord, and communicated his misfortune.—“ That he had been sent to Town with *one hundred brace of birds*, from the County of Suffolk, for which he was to have received half-a-Crown a brace, from the person to whom he was to deliver them, and he lived in Leadenhall Market; but having most unfortunately lost his directions, and neither *the time* or *the occasion* admitting of delay, he had no alternative, but to solicit the interposing offices of a Stranger, to shield him

him from the impending horror of his situation." The Landlord (as may be readily supposed) promised his instantaneous assistance; the Countryman full of disquietude returned to his Cart, and *in half an hour* the hampers were unpacked in the Publican's Cellar, and the contents immediately divided between *the Landlord, a Poulterer, and his Friend*, who took the whole at eighteen pence per brace, paying the Countryman his Seven Pounds, ten Shillings, for their bargain. And I believe from this circumstance so accidentally discovered, and so perfectly authenticated, we may fairly infer, this is not by *many*, the only journey that has been made to the Metropolis upon a similar occasion.

My Lords and Gentlemen, without a design to irritate, or "harrow up your feelings" with unnecessary repetitions; let such

public contempt of pains and penalties loudly proclaim the exalted wisdom of PARLIAMENTARY PROSCRIPTION. Happy preface of compulsive reformation in the political tenets of the British Senate, when the rough unpolished courage of an injured Rustic dare stem the torrent of Ministerial Persecution, regardless of the complicated punishments they have in store for the undiscovered culprits, which *thank heaven* they can inflict only *in imagination*. I could add to the mortification of Legislative imbecility, and offer to your reflections a multiplicity of such *entertaining anecdotes*, but I shall let it suffice to assure you, that Game of all sorts, and in all quantities, has been for years, handed about for sale, in every country town without restraint, or the least fear of information. The long stages on the Western and Norfolk Roads, have in general plenty for the London Purchasers ; and
there

there are certain receptacles in the Metropolis (which might be pointed out to the inquisitive eye of eager curiosity) where an enquirer of decent appearance, may be accommodated with a sufficiency to furnish out a city feast. The Stage Waggoners, upon all the roads (friends to the common cause) can execute an order of the kind to *any amount* ; and the traveller never finds a difficulty in procuring from the *Landlord*, or the *Waiter* of his Inn, a *Hare*, *Pheasant*, or *Leash of Birds*, to send off by the vehicle to his London Friends in the morning.

I shall here venture to appeal to the private judgment of every individual of either house, when seated in the chair of domestic retirement and reflection, Whether he can believe such an accumulation of dead Game to be the production of Gunners of *every denomination* ? No ! . . . The indulgence of

such an Idea, even for a moment would be palpably ridiculous. The fair Sportsman qualified and unqualified, with all the exertion, perseverance and industry that human strength will admit of, could never effect (from dog and gun) half the destruction of a nocturnal combination, constituted solely upon the basis of your own *patriotic* institution. I am willing, however to reverse the case for the present, and suppose you are convinced the Nocturnal Adventurers, with their curiously devised engines of destruction, are *the only class* entitled to your indignation and whole force of resentment. Admitting this, I see but one way that even a melioration of the evil is to be expected; for the Laws are so numerous, so complicated, and in many parts so inexplicable, that could Informers be procured, (which is by time and experience proved impossible) I have

have but little reason to expect relief from their being carried into execution.

In fact the Country Magistrate cannot be in a much more disagreeable predicament, than in a case of the kind if brought before him; for the Offenders are so reconciled to the business, as to think themselves justified in pursuing it; the Neighbours (*to a man*) agree they have done no more than *their duty*; and I have not the least doubt, (as the laws now stand) if a Magistrate should levy the penalties, or inflict the punishment of imprisonment upon any *one*, or *more* of such party, but the depredators would be so true to each other, as to *levy* ample revenge upon some part of his property, without waiting long for a serious opportunity.

My Lords and Gentlemen, seeing this business through the just medium of experimental

mental observation, that all menaces denounced against the parties, all encouragement promised to information, has never produced the least effect; that where one information has been laid, the *culprit convicted* and the *fine levied*, five Thousand *have been rewarded*; I relinquish every hope, expectation, or desire of seeing the Game increased or protected by Parliamentary severity. If the late unprecedented destruction and present scarcity has not given you reason to abandon *such prospects*, proceed in the full and flattering career of imaginary consequence and deceptive subordination; INCREASE your LAWS, enlarge your PENALTIES, extend your RESTRICTIONS, and still endeavour to *preserve* THAT GAME, you have so long, and so *plentifully increased*.

Having introduced thus much in observation

on upon that enormous mass of inconsistency, the Laws in their present general construction and state of indivisibility to be rendered comprehensible; I shall proceed to consider, such late additional restrictions, as come directly under the head of "the GAME CERTIFICATE TAX," and endeavour clearly and impartially to demonstrate its effects, divested of Chicanery, deception, misrepresentation, or interested opposition. That I may not be unjustly supposed the intentional trumpet of *either*, it becomes perfectly applicable and directly in point, to declare my own disinterestedness upon the subject, and total indifference to what Laws are adopted, but as an individual anxious to promote the sport and entertainment of Posterity, as well as to *avert if possible* the threatened extermination; having in consequence of the general and almost incredible scarcity of Game, and more advantageous engagements, totally relinquished

linquished the use of *Dogs and Gun*, with which for a series of more than twenty years, I have uninterruptedly enjoyed the sport in its utmost extent (when abstracted from its present drudgery) upon many of your best Manors in various counties of the Kingdom, possessing no other QUALIFICATION or *permission* but my BRACE OF POINTERS, a consciousness of what *Liberty should be*, and an inflexible determination to pursue a sport, *I felt myself* equally entitled to, with the MOST OPULENT of those who had so greatly signalized themselves in the formation of an *interested Monopoly*. I am sorry to be under the necessity of producing a fact so insignificant as my own personal contempt of *Pains, Penalties and Persecutions* in confirmation of the Aggregate; but my honor is pledged to demonstrate the destructive tendency of these Laws, and their inefficacy must be pointed out.

My

My Lords and Gentlemen, I believe it is perfectly within your recollection, that our financier has been accustomed in his exordium to the introduction of the *annual Budget* to tell you, "that the task of proposing, or imposing Taxes upon the Public is, of all others, the least likely to acquire Popularity." This stands admitted an incontrovertible Truth, the imposing of Taxes, having in its progress to encounter innumerable and capricious opinions, as prompted by the various motives of *Political Opposition—Penny-rsious Principle—Party rancour—or disaffected Prejudice*. Proceeding implicitly upon the purport of his *own declaration*, we are naturally led to conclude, that such taxes as he is from his situation, under the indispensable necessity of proposing, for the sanction of your approbation, are those *least likely* to create popular disapprobation; at the same time that they bear the probability
of

of becoming both *permanent* and *effective*. Forming this conclusion as directly conducive to the dignity of his official Capacity, it is exceedingly just we should give him credit for the *sincerity of his design*, which was undoubtedly to have INCREASED the REVENUE and *preserved the Game*, by the indigested formation and precarious issue of the Tax before us. A Plan in the eagerness of the moment fraught with *probability*, and in the extremity of expectation considered *infallible*; but when it is recollected, that the MINISTER himself had *no practical knowledge* of the subject, no information to form his judgment upon, but the *Theoretic Opinions* and *delusive schemes* of MINISTERIAL PROJECTORS and *official dependents*, it cannot be productive of the least surprise, that for the last FIVE YEARS, the Tax has proportionally *diminished* as the Game has been reduced.

IF

If there are still wanting farther proofs of that reduction, I have only to appeal to your own dispassionate decision, and the information you derive from your *Keepers*,—your *domestic dependents* and *sporting Friends*; by the major part of whom, (if not servilely silent, or politically deceptive) you may be most authentically convinced of the present wretched and impoverished state of all sorts of Game in every part of the Kingdom. But that no collateral proof may be omitted that can assist in bringing home the well founded charge of “*SPEEDY ANNIHILATION*,” I beg permission to call to our aid, the annual diminution of the Certificate Tax, which when once introduced, and palpably demonstrated by Arithmetical proofs from the *Books of Office*; will evidently counteract every declaration that may be attempted, and every opinion that may have been formed

ed upon the (imaginary) permanence of the Tax, or expected preservation of the Game.

Respecting the diminution of the Tax, although it might not be *publicly observed*, it was certainly *officially known* for the four years in succession; and although we have already given the FINANCIER credit for the sincerity of his intention in the *first* instance, that *sincerity* became very considerably warped, by the late addition to the Tax, more particularly when so suspiciously conducted under the mask of duplicity. My Lords and Gentlemen, it is hardly necessary for me to observe to you, (who know the traits of character so much more intimately, and have no doubt critically annalized his *points* and *perfections*) that our present PRIME MINISTER is singularly averse to the personal mortification of *Mental Abortion*; and would rather encounter an accumulation of difficulties

difficulties and popular obstruction, (in his perseverance) than suffer his dignity to be degraded by relinquishing any scheme or projection once adopted, tho' it *evidently tended to its own destruction*. This remark I presume to make, under the pleasing reflection, that I have your general concurrence with me in an assertion, that "Perfection is not in human nature;" that being admitted upon fair ground; I see no reason why we are to expect *infallibility*, in a CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, or FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, more than in the *inferior* and less conspicuous orders of the Creation. The plain unembellished state of the fact is this; there are in the multitude numbers, who seeing very little, if at all, beyond *their own shadows*, implicitly rely upon appearances; and fall into every *vortex* thrown open for their deception. These were induced to *hope*, if not *believe*, that the NEW GAME

LAWS would entirely suppress the constantly increasing progress of *Poaching*, and that the CERTIFICATE TAX would preserve (if not increase) the little breed of Game *then* remaining; upon such slender presumption, most of those who wished or expected it, cheerfully took out their Licences for the *first two or three years*; but when the evident destruction and unprecedented scarcity of Game came *plainly home*, to the *plainest* comprehension, and the obstinately incredulous were compelled to believe; every Man's *pride*, as well as his *reason* took the alarm, and he could no longer reconcile it to his understanding, to continue a heavy contribution to Government for the *condescending privilege* of pursuit, when there was absolutely *little or nothing* left to *pursue*.

This, My Lords and Gentlemen, is the exact estimation of the Game Laws and Certificate

tificate Tax at this moment, the Game rapidly reduced, and the Tax *consequently* diminished; but least the assertions of an individual should be considered (by self interested or party opponents) literary efforts, or *fashionable falsehoods*, fabricated merely to gloss the cause engaged in, and not as demonstrative proofs, uniformly produced, to influence the judgment and confirm the fact. It is in some degree fortunate, that I am luckily enabled to avail myself of the Assistance so generously afforded me from the researches of OFFICIAL AUTHORITY; a channel of information that is *too generally* and *too meanly* sequestered from Patriotic inspection. This almost unprecedented specimen of Public Spirit, and personal liberality, happily affords me the advantage of not only setting at defiance, but decisively wiping away, all superficial formations and Theoretic Opinions upon the *efficacy* and *permanence* of such

Tax, by a chain of evidence, every link of which, is too palpable to be disputed, too substantially authenticated to be denied.

My Lords and Gentlemen, to establish these points beyond the power of controversy, to prove the *penetration* and practical knowledge of the Minister's *sporting Friends*, and to perpetuate the *unerring veracity* of that Minister's *predetermined prediction*, upon the permanent production of such *favorite* and *infallible* Tax; permit me to lay before you, an exact statement of the amount of the Game Duty Licences for each year, from 1785, (the first of their establishment) to the last of the present year, 1792, thereby incontrovertibly demonstrating, the amount of the Tax to be less *in its aggregate* (even with the additional pecuniary restriction) for the PRESENT YEAR, than in the year, 1787; when with all its *speculative prospects*,

it

it was at the zenith of plausibility ; and from which period the persecuting principle of Ministerial Oppression, has been gradationally counteracted (and will be totally eclipsed) by the persevering and spirited resentment of a *firm, steady* and enlightened People.

As it will be evidently unnecessary to attract your attention largely from objects of GREATER PUBLIC (or *more private*) importance, by too extensive a recital, I shall proceed to present in as concise a way as possible, such Arithmetic Proofs as become immediately conducive to the purpose of conviction. But as it would be too tedious for general perusal and investigation to introduce, arrange and correct the official documents of *every County* in the Kingdom, it will be much more applicable to contract the substance of the whole and reduce it to

a single point of view, by fixing upon the first County as it stands Alphabetically (BERKSHIRE) for the CRITERION; which being not only in some degree central, but universally acknowledged proportionally POPULOUS, FERTILE, and OPULENT with any other, may be fairly and candidly concluded (at least in this instance) to speak the general sense of the people at large, upon a Law so *truly* TYRANNICAL, and a Tax so *justly* DESPISED. Previous to which statement, it becomes unavoidably necessary to make the most honorable mention of, and express my grateful acknowledgments to, those Gentlemen, who so cheerfully waved the characteristic and accustomed *secrecy of office*, to furnish collateral proofs for so PATRIOTIC a purpose.

The Annual Amount of The Game Duty in Berkshire, from 1785, to 1792, both inclusive.

Years.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>No. of 2 Gu. Certificates issued.</i>				<i>Amount.</i>		
					<i>£.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1785	—	—	475	—	—	997	10 0
1786	—	—	490	—	—	1029	0 0
1787	—	—	493	—	—	1035	6 0
1788	—	—	484	—	—	1016	8 0
1789	—	—	457	—	—	959	14 0
1790	—	—	441	—	—	926	2 0

Tax increased to 3 Guinea Certificates.

1791	—	—	375	—	—	1181	5 0
1792	—	—	325	—	—	1023	15 0

Under these heads, thus accurately stated, we observe a gradual defalcation of Certificates, from the year eighty-seven, to the year ninety-two, in the following ratio.

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In

In the first year a falling off of Nine.

The Second ————— of Thirty-Six.

The Third ————— of Fifty-Two.

The Fourth ————— One *Hundred*
and *Eighteen*.

And

* The Present ————— of ONE HUN-
DRED and SIXTY-EIGHT.

Being more than *one third* of the original
Subscribers to this "*voluntary Tax*," in so
short a space as the last five years of its esta-
blishment.

My Lords and Gentlemen, you in your
moments of retrospection will be enabled to
recollect, whether this immaculate "*Heaven*
born Minister," in his adulatory exordium
to the proposed increase of this execrated
Tax, (so evidently adopted for the good of
his

* By List Published October 2, in the County Paper.

his Country, the preservation of the Game, and the exulting *hope* of paying off a Million a year of the National debt) did *openly, candidly*, or in fact (more comprehensively speaking) HONESTLY condescend to inform you, what had been the real produce, and *experienced* annual deficiency of the Duty, for the three last years immediately preceding his reiterated innovation. Did he, come forward and say, that in consequence of such unexpected *falling off of the Tax*, and unforeseen destruction and consequent scarcity of Game, he was under the necessity of enhancing the Duty to render it *equally productive* with what it *had been*? Or, that he found it *politically* expedient to *surcharge* such Tax (already highly productive) that it might, by its present prospect and promising permanence, become *still more* subservient to the exigencies of the state, and the *rapacity* of its dependents? thereby endeavouring

to

to conceal from the public his own *shame* and *disappointment*. Whether he *did*, or *did* not, is not at all necessary to the establishment of a palpable truth ; *either* declaration would not have reflected much honor upon his sporting penetration, or his sincerity : for as *one* would have afforded ample proof of his IMBECILITY, so the *other* would have been equally expressive of his DUPLICITY.

My Lords and Gentlemen, you are not so imperfectly read in the infinite volume of human transactions, as not to know what MINISTERS and PARLIAMENTS *have been* ; nor are you now to be told what incongruous *embryo* the WOMB of TIME may yet be pregnant with. This seems to be the age of *versatility* and REVOLUTION, and the present generation may *live to see*, a PRIME MINISTER the basking favourite of his Sovereign

vereign, at the moment he is a professed enemy to the rights of the People ; enjoying all the dazzling Splendour of Official dignity, without the common civilities of a Private Gentleman ; whose personal pride and *innate frigidity* may prompt him to treat even his equals with *indifference*, and his unfortunate inferiors with *contempt* ; who may be perfectly abstracted from all those refined sensations that are an ornament to human Nature, and feeling *little* or *none* for the distresses of the subordinate and afflicted part of the Creation, care not *how much* he sacrifices to the INFLUENCE OF THE CROWN, how *little* to the CLAIMS OF THE PEOPLE. Who piquing himself upon his *passive* majority in Parliament, may feel a gratification of family ambition, in raising to the most opulent and eminent stations of trust, every remote remnant of *consanguinity* and relative sterility ; with no other distinguishing
mark,

mark, than an invincible impenetrability of intellect; whilst GENIUS, ABILITY and INTEGRITY, lay diffidently dormant in the dark recesses of obscurity. I say, My Lords and Gentlemen, we *may yet see*, Ministers, under the mask of that *Political Cunning*, and *designing dissimulation*, so feelingly depicted by the celebrated CHESTERFIELD, (as absolutely indispensable to the accomplishments of a *Courtier*) influence, deceive, or corrupt, the *intentional purity of Parliament*, to the worst of purposes. Nay, it is not beyond the pale of possibility, but some of those *who now live* may see, a Minister not only compelled (by an unanimous vote of Parliament) to relinquish so favourite a system of finance, by a total repeal of *these Laws*, when there is neither GAME TO DESTROY, or DUTY TO COLLECT; but after solacing himself for years in the exhilarating rays of Royalty, surrounded by a servile herd

herd of adulating Sycophants, and flattered to the very summit of *Prosperity*, reduced to the most mortifying state of human existence by the barbed arrow of *Adversity*; without the consolatory remembrance of one single act of JUSTICE or BENEVOLENCE, during his career of Oppressive insensibility, or a friendly finger of commiseration to close the eye of contrite misery, at the tremendous moment of passing that "bourn from whence no traveller returns;" in which dark chaos of futurity, all is obscured from the scrutinizing eye of even the most VIRTUOUS and RELIGIOUS investigation.

My Lords and Gentlemen, superior excellence in prophetic divination, or a proficiency in characteristic delineation is by no means necessary, to "hold as 'twere the MIRROR up to NATURE, to shew VIRTUE her OWN FEATURE, SCORN her own *image*, and
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the very age and body of the Time, his form and preffure." A Pen lefs seriously inclined, or influenced by *factionous motives*, might be induced to animadvert more freely upon the fupposed degeneracy of the Times, the fashionable pliability of Parliament, and the delinquency of thofe who guide the reins of Government, as moft applicable to the party it meant to efpoufe. But My Lords and Gentlemen, with fome degree of confidence and exultation on my part, let it be known to you, that mine is the Pen of INDEPENDENCE and cannot become the fubfervient inftrument of *Prostitution*. Its invariable purpofe is to *convince*, not to *detract*; it is embarked in the caufe of THE PEOPLE, unattached to *Party*, without any thing to *hope* from one, or to *fear* from the other; not dependent upon the narrow prejudices and capricious fluctuation of *interested individuals*, but acting upon the more extenfive fcale of NATIO-

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NAL INDULGENCE, with no other prospect than the GENERAL GOOD.

My Lords and Gentlemen, having already introduced a slight remark upon the generally received possibility, of a Parliament's being "*Corrupted, Influenced, or Deceived*" by the superlative dissimulation, Political finesse, or accomplished Cunning of Ministers, as proved (upon such * excellent Authority) so immediately necessary to their existence; I must beg leave to wipe away, any early impression that may be unfavourably formed, upon the *bare possibility* of the *present* Parliament's being at all *vulnerable* on the score of CORRUPTION in the formation of THE GAME LAWS: that they have been both *influenced* and *deceived*, I believe will be readily admitted by every *just* and *good* Man in the Kingdom. But My Lords and Gentlemen, when I presume to assert boldly,
that

* Chesterfield.

that you have been "INFLUENCED and DECEIVED," I do not by any means intend to insinuate, or wish it to be understood, that you have been unfairly biaſſed by any MINISTERIAL practices; but "*influenced*" only by an invariable attachment to *your* OWN INTERESTS, and unfortunately "*deceived*" in the event. This poſition ſtands upon a baſis too ſelf evident to require the leaſt corroboration; in juſtification of which, let me claim permiſſion to appeal to the calm and unimpaſſioned ſenſations of every individual of either houſe, when ſeated in the eaſy chair of domeſtic rumination, whether (ſuppoſing him even *one of thoſe* bleſſed with a portion of Philanthropy and univerſal benevolence,) the ſtimulative pride of local ſuperiority, and inſtinctive emulation, did not prompt him (in the formation of theſe laws) to the imaginary gratification of diſplaying his power, and monopolizing the Game, beyond the influence

ence of any contiguous competitor. My Lords and Gentlemen, to suppose you less liable to those predominant sensations of Mortality, AMBITION and SELF INTEREST, than the rest of mankind; were to conceive that a day of election to *one house*, or of creation to *the other*, was a day of political absolution, and that a seat *in either*, was become a seat of purification and infallibility.

I am under the necessity of candidly confessing myself one of the infinite number who with such Parliamentary initiation was a certain prelude to future perfection; but I confidently believe, the very great majority of that multitude, who annually look up to the wisdom of both houses, for the national protection of their Persons, and preservation of property, will think me amply justified in imputing to every Mem-

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ber of the Legislative Body, an equal portion of those characteristic traits, with the most inferior of their constituents ; implicitly believing, that from the prevalent impurity and degeneracy of our Natures, an introduction to a seat in the Senate, can have but very little influence in reforming the *minds* and *manners* of men ; but rather tends to display an extension of the infectious and daily increasing ostentation, that so evidently marks our systematic degradation. My Lords and Gentlemen, I mean that contemptible personal pride and external appearance, that has not only superseded the dictates of reason, and set the *obtrusion* of DISCRETION at *defiance* ; but given birth to every species of Eastern Luxury and enervation. *Disguised* our WOMEN ; *Effeminated* our MEN ; prostituted the remains of rural dignity ; tainted the attachment of the Tenantry ; jaundiced the fidelity of domestic dependents ;

dependents; and laid the *Axe* to the very root of OLD ENGLISH HOSPITALITY. In short, what by far the greater part of Magnificent Mansions, and Manor Houses *now are*, it will be much more proper for others to conceive, than for me to describe.

My Lords and Gentlemen, making the necessary transition from the various motives and personal prospects of the parties who concurred in the formation of these Laws, to the Operative Spirit of the Laws themselves; the surprise that is at first excited by their *absurdity, inconsistency, and destructive tendency*, is almost instantly dispelled when we consider them sanctioned and introduced to Parliament, by a Minister who could so far forget the weakness of that Sex we have ever been accustomed to protect, and with a certain degree of inanimation, to be equalled only by the coldness of his constitution,

rise from his seat and propose a Tax, upon what our *very feelings* prompt us to believe with strict truth, the greatest comfort of our Lives, - - - A WOMAN! —I have ever considered it a gratification of my utmost ambition; that I have the happiness to be personally known to many members of both houses, and those who do know me, *best know*; from the difference of temperament, or the traits of character, (as a Sportsman, and an inviolable friend to the Sex) that had I been honored with a seat in that, or any other Senate, I would sooner have acceded to a Tax upon all other THINGS in the universe, than the *very thing* alluded to. And perhaps it may be erroneously imagined I mean to sport an Idea of jocularly, when on the contrary it is my intent to declare *most seriously*, I never felt myself more mortified or disappointed, than when I found the whole BENCH OF BISHOPS, had not risen

unâ

unâ voce to oppose the Bill, or at least to have entered their *Protest* against the *absolute sin* of Taxing the UNIVERSAL BUMPER of every *Good Man* in the Kingdom. It however affords some consolation in the midst of *shame*, that REMORSE has occasioned a *Repeal*; and for the honor of Parliament, as well as the Kingdom at large, I most heartily wish (if it were possible) the *very remembrance*, as well as THE ACT, might be expunged from the Journals as disgraceful to the Age and Land in which we live.

Returning however to the inefficacy of the Law upon which I presume to arrest your attention, I must be permitted to introduce two instances (of a thousand that might be adduced) in corroboration of a remark made in my Prefatory Address to the Premier; that the present Certificate Tax, certainly admits the *possibility*, indeed the probability,

bability of "A PEER and *Cobler's* meeting in the same field uncertain of each other's privilege." This supposition is every way admissible, for the *Cobler* having assumed the Character and pleasures of a GENTLEMAN, (in consideration of an annual contribution to Government) would never so far deviate from his newly acquired dignity, as to insist upon the name, of a PEER, or a sight of his Certificate; and equally certain it is, there is no one PEER that would be exceeded in politeness by a *Cobler*.

My Lords and Gentlemen, however inapplicable or obtrusive this remark may appear at first sight, I must beg leave to assert it *directly in point*; and least such mode of reasoning unsupported by proof, should be considered the effect of imagination calculated rather to deceive than convince, I avail myself of the opportunity to proclaim the
reverse

reverse and state the fact. I pledge you my honor, I have the power and means to produce (could I condescend to prostitute my principles and become that tool of infamy, an Informer) the most incontestible evidence, that in one and the same year since the establishment of the GAME DUTY, Certificates were taken out in a City of Opulence, not only by a Journeyman Upholsterer, then absolutely renting a room at two shillings per week; but by a *Journeyman Shoemaker* also, (whose names I have at this moment in my possession); the latter of whom BOLDLY but *prudently* annexed the honorable and *fashionable* appellation of "ESQUIRE" to *his*, the better to conceal those awkward appendages the *leathern apron* and *lapstone*. My Lords and Gentlemen, after such "damning proofs" of the contempt of these Laws, by even the lowest classes of society, can it be necessary for me to dip deeper into

the reservoir of carefully collected facts, to prove the weakness and inconsistency of *continuing* such Laws; or to excite your belief of what is too universally known, and too publicly authenticated for any rational Man to doubt even for a moment, the purity of information.

Before I take leave of this part of the subject, to which I return no more, I must be permitted in addition to the recent recital of such sporting fortitude as the SOMERSETSHIRE *Mechanics*, to mention contrasts equally striking, within the circle of my own Equestrian Excursions; where I constantly see, Persons of opulence and known landed qualification, pursuing their toil (for sport it must certainly now be divested of) not only without perceiving, but *absolutely disavowing*, the least necessity for, that exulting badge of Parliamentary permission, A CERTIFICATE.

TIFICATE. To these I take the liberty to annex a class of my most *intimate* Friends, who after the expence of their Certificates, and two months incessant pursuit with less success than ever; are so perfectly convinced of the unprecedented scarcity and threatened annihilation, that their dogs and guns are doomed to suspension and rest from their labors: and a certain fact it is, that there are *some hundreds* in the Kingdom, and those not inferior shots, who have never had to boast of three brace of birds for their three Pounds, four Shillings, from the commencement of the season. Under such general declarations made in all places, and circulated from all quarters, it requires no great degree of prophetic inspiration to predict a falling off of the duty for the next year, in proportion to the almost incredible destruction of Game for the two or three years last past.

My

My Lords and Gentlemen, having offered such accurate state of the Game, and produced such explanatory proofs of the destructive tendency of Parliamentary *proscription*, as will I believe, not be disputed by the *deepest head*, or *dullest* comprehension in the Kingdom; it becomes necessary (at least to my purpose) to take into re-consideration, the practices of those desperate instruments of a superior power, the various banditti of Poachers that infest every part of the Kingdom. To such an unprecedented degree of hardened perfection has that systematic depredation been carried on (in the most ludicrous contempt of your Laws) under the universal sanction of an unanimous and determined body of the people; that no hope of reformation can be expected from the utmost severity, it is in the power of Parliament to proclaim, or the intentional hope of the Ministers of justice to inflict.

slict. Having already repeatedly asserted
 (and Parliamentary experience for seven
 years past, has convinced them of the fact)
 that all the boasted *Pains, Penalties* and
Prosecutions, so liberally threatened in the
 curiously constructed fabric, have been long
 since immersed in the vortex of popular ex-
 ecration; I proceed to explain concisely an
 oblique survey of the collateral injuries sus-
 tained by the country in general, as another
 resulting consequence from the unprece-
 dented destruction and present scarcity of
 The Game. This palpable deficiency in
 the annual emoluments arising from the
 practice, (in addition to the constant in-
 crease of its Professors) having rendered the
 business *too trifling* for sole subsistence; it
 has become unavoidably necessary to call in
 the farther aid of Nocturnal depredation of
Poultry from the *Hen-roost*, or *Fish* from the
Ponds of those Noblemen or Gentlemen
 whose

whose domains are luckily situated, and happily calculated to gratify their immediate wants and reward their adventures. So well and so fully am I convinced of this practice from the most indubitable proofs, that I will venture to affirm, Poaching in the *first* instance, and a failure of it in the *last*, has constituted more Rustic Thieves of the above description, than every other excitement brought into the Aggregate.

My Lords and Gentlemen, do me the justice to assure yourselves this is not the fertility of imagination, or the heightening of fiction intentionally calculated to impress upon your minds "the round unvarnished tale;" but a truth too forcibly known, and with the approach of winter, *too seriously dreaded* in every part of the Country. It is by no means necessary, nor is it my intent to increase the mortification of reflection,

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by an aggravating recital of corroborating instances, that have never yet been brought into a court of justice ; I shall therefore let it suffice to say, that I most confidently believe, there are very few (if any) Members of either house, whose external Property, or out door Stock, has not at some time or other suffered in these Nocturnal excursions as well as the Game : the alternative becoming now more immediately necessary, in proportion as the Game is annually reduced.

My Lords and Gentlemen, if we go still farther, and extend our researches, looking more minutely into the increasing practice of Poaching and Nocturnal depredation ; exclusive of the constant encouragement and pecuniary temptation eternally held forth by the class of People already described, we must advert in a slight degree
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to the state of the Rustic poor in almost every part of the Kingdom.—This I must be permitted to declare is *truly horrid* beyond description ! . . If, My Lords and Gentlemen, arrogance, pride, opposition, or contrariety of opinion should prompt the most supercilious of society, to put THEORY in competition with PRACTICE, and start the question from whence I derived my knowledge for such communication ; I reply, from that invariable and steady touchstone of Truth *experience*, in a personal inspection of, and Professional attendance upon the sick and necessitous of various parishes (in the centre of a most fertile county) where the sufferings of the Poor, “beggar all description” and “harrow up the soul of humanity.” —Where the accumulated distress and *rigidity of relief* bear no proportion to each other—and where the uncharitable oppressive severity of parish Officers, and
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the inflexible callosity of insensible VILLAGE TYRANTS first determined me to relinquish *Parochial Practice*, that I might be released from a Repetition of diurnal scenes the most miserable; in which the law did not enable me to *relieve the object*, or *redress the grievance*.

My Lords and Gentlemen, I can have no doubt but very many of you experience the uxorial solicitude, and parental anxiety of a family; with the perpetual suspense that so incessantly pervades the mind, for the *comfort*, the *safety* and the *happiness* of the whole. Change the scene for one moment from the domestic affluence, the thousand gratifications and superfluities of your *own* habitations; to the feelings of a Parent much less refined, but *no less natural*. Stand in the shoes of inexpressible wretchedness, and behold *a Wife and seven or eight children*

dren ("bare forked animals") not living, but barely existing, or rather *half starving*, upon the miserable pittance of *fourteen pence* per day, the produce of from twelve to fifteen hours labor; survey the sum, explore *its magnitude*, and again turn "the mind's eye," to the *unhappy group*, destined by fate and harder Fortune, to subsist upon its scanty produce. Here I may justly exclaim,

"Take physic, Pomp;

"Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel;

"That thou may'st shake the superflux to them,

"And shew the heavens more just."

Bread—Water—Skim Milk (if the neighbourhood even at a mile or two distant luckily affords it) and a few Potatoes are the utmost limits of their LUXURY. These are *their delicacies* in sickness or in health, and should disease with all her impending horrors pervade the hovel, (to complete the measure

measure of human Affliction) the consolation most frequently to be procured by *tears* and *entreaties*, in the midst of such inexpressible poverty and wretchedness, is a reluctant mandate from that Parochial PROFESSOR OF HUMANITY the Overseer, for the Superintendence of the *Medical Annuitant*, who having, though at some considerable distance, influenced by his necessities, engaged to supply the Paupers of the whole parish (for five or six miles in extent) for the paltry stipend of EIGHT OR TEN pounds, can afford very few *simple preparations*, in addition to the *surprising efficacy* of his attendance; and should such personal inspection, in the dreariest of all seasons, prove *food* to be more immediately necessary than *Physic*, it is no uncommon thing to be obliged to threaten these humane, charitable, church going, psalm singing delegates, with a summons to the seat of Magistracy, be-

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fore a *Neck of Mutton* (at the expence of the most opulent in the Parish) can be obtained for the children of wretchedness, overwhelmed with POVERTY and DISEASE. This is a picture of complicated distress not introduced to dwell on, nor is it to be found amidst the brilliancies of a Court, the routine of Grandeur and perpetual dissipation, or the *enlivening rapturous* scenes in which the GREAT and OPULENT are so incessantly engaged; it is only to be seen in those dark recesses and remote abodes of *misery*, where GREATNESS seldom or never *condescends* to come, or cast the eye of charitable enquiry for the benignant purpose of alleviation.

My Lords and Gentlemen, can it be supposed, that in the midst of such distressing scene, where "horrors upon horrors accumulate," there is at this moment a
HUSBAND,

HUSBAND, or PARENT to be found, who would not spurn at your Game Laws with contempt, sacrifice his rest, hazard his health, and encounter all your *high sounding* denunciations of vengeance, to obtain (under the certainty of pecuniary reward, and popular applause) PHEASANT, HARE, or PARTRIDGE, rather than stand tamely by with a degree of pusillanimous insensibility, to see the tears of his Wife, and hear the cries of his Children laboring under those *heart piercing pangs*, which only unsatisfied hunger can excite. My Lords and Gentlemen, Parliament may be IMMACULATE, its Members (for aught I know) may be abstracted from those grosser dregs, those degrading passions that the more inferior part of the creation are so evidently subject to; they *may be* happily possessed of VIRTUES very far above the more subordinate classes of mankind, and *probably* retain

a greater degree of *self denial*, than less illumined and less conspicuous characters may have to boast. For my own part "tied and bound down with the chain of my sins," I acknowledge my want of such Parliamentary purification, and feel no disquietude in publicly confessing, I have A MONITOR within my bosom, that powerfully tells me what I am: — *A Mere Man*, open to all the failings and indiscretions of human nature; but happily and feelingly alive to the claims of HUMANITY and DOMESTIC AFFECTION. These conjoin to convince me, that in such dreadful predicament (as I have already described) with no other alternative than the picture affords, I should exultingly say, "My Poverty but not my will consents," and become *one of the numerous culprits*, thinking my principles suffer no depreciation by so determined an opinion, upon so popular a subject. Nay, my DEPRAVITY,

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(if I may so be permitted to term it) compels me to proceed a *step farther* in defence of WOMEN and CHILDREN to declare, if I could suppose there was a *single wretch existing*, who would not do as much for both the one and the other, I should be the first to stigmatize and hunt him down as a disgrace to humanity.

My Lords and Gentlemen, having brought into as concise a point as the nature of the case will admit, the necessitous state of the rustic poor, it becomes immediately applicable to explain one very predominant reason why that class are eternally increasing, and almost every Parish loaded with additional labourers, Paupers and accumulating expence. It cannot be unknown to you how much the practice of engrossing Farms, has been adopted by the *Renters*, or with what avidity such proposals have been encouraged

and accepted by the Landlords; many of whom possessing seats in those houses I presume to address, it can by no means be deemed improper to say, that whatever may have been their original motives for permitting such plurality of Farms in the hands of individuals, it has been attended with a very palpable inconvenience to the Kingdom in general, but more particularly to that unhappy class, by much the least able to extricate themselves from the difficulty occasioned. No less than having raised the price of provisions, nay the most common necessaries of life to a degree of exorbitance, not *in the first instance* foreseen, but *now* heavily experienced by all the inferior classes of community; and I may in addition safely venture to affirm, that within the last five and thirty years, those very necessaries of Life are many of them *doubled* and some nearly *treble* the price

price they were at the period I allude to. But, My Lords and Gentlemen, what shall I be enabled to advance in favor of our PHILANTHROPY, our *National* and *Universal* Benevolence, when adverting to an incontrovertible fact; that in all those years of increasing expence, and most shamefully increasing *Luxury, Pride* and *Personal Ostentation* among the GREAT and OPULENT, the wretched Poor have felt only hourly increasing Poverty and heart-felt Affliction. And sorry I am to observe, to the immortal shame of the Age we live in, that no one effectual, or decisive step has ever been taken, during the advancing price of provisions, to raise the daily wages of the poor rustic labourer, who may be truly said to "labor in sorrow all the days of his life."

Having introduced this remark as not only applicable to my own particular pur-

pose, but as not unworthy even PARLIAMENTARY ATTENTION, (for reasons that might be extended to a much greater length than the purport of the present remonstrance will admit) I am anxiously induced to hope, the time is not far distant when some step so truly PATRIOTIC and HUMANE may be adopted, to give more peace and domestic comfort to so numerous a body of our fellow creatures, existing at present under a complication of severities, very little known to those who tread the more pleasant and easy paths of life.

My Lords and Gentlemen, not to dwell too long upon subjects that are neither pleasing to read or recite, I shall return to that prejudicial practice of landed Monopoly, as the great and almost original, and sole cause of the scarcity, and misery among the *distrest Poor*; that I beg permission most earnestly

nestly to recommend to Parliamentary attention. But as tedious animadversion in the aggregate, would engross more time and room than my incessant engagements will permit me to appropriate to the present purpose of representation; I shall content myself with stating a single *substantiated* case in point, to serve as a specimen of the very *extensive picture* that might be introduced of the whole. To do this, My Lords and Gentlemen, with a proper degree of effect, it will be necessary *to bring to view*, for the honor of Parliamentary inspection, an Opulent Wretch (living in the most artificial Poverty) "too bad for bad report;" who in a Parish of considerable extent, no more than thirty miles from London, and surrounded within a few miles by Mansions of both PEERS and COMMONS, is the renter of six or seven *distinct* and *separate* Farms in the same Parish, (that
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originally and within a few years past supported as many families); the dwelling houses of all which, are in a state of the utmost desolation, and the once happy neighbourhood become depopulate, to gratify the avarice, and most inhuman penury of a Character that is universally admitted, *where known*, a disgrace to Human Nature.

Having thus concisely recited the Fact, I shall proceed to state the consequence so far as it appertains to the subject before us, and tends to affect either the *good* or *evil* of Community. Considering it gradationally, we may first take into consideration his being almost perpetually in the Office of Overseer, for either one Farm, or another; and as *in proportion to his Rent*, he pays from Thirty to Five and Forty Pounds to each rate, which occurring constantly three and often four times in the year, custom and
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the unrelenting cruelty of his disposition having prompted him to believe such disbursement is a great imposition under the sanction of LAW, and that it is absolutely money *unjustly* taken out of his own pocket, it will be no arduous task to conceive how *luxuriously* the Poor *subsist* under such protection. Passing this slight survey with only an oblique view of its various and concomitant ills, we naturally revert to the dreary habitations *desolate* and *decaying*, where some few years since lived Families in repute and a scene of happiness, upon the rented produce of an hundred Acres. Each spot that produced its *Calves*, *Pigs*, *Butter*, *Geese*, *Ducks*, *Fowls*, and *Eggs* for the Neighbouring Market, is now the allotted habitation of one of his own wretched labourers, not only at an exorbitant rent, (and that deducted from his labor weekly) but with the uncharitable appendage of not
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being permitted to keep *a single animal*, or *Fowl* to assist in supporting his Family, least it should derive *any part* of its subsistence from the barn door of this OPPRESSIVE, CRUEL, UNRELENTING Tyrant.

My Lords and Gentlemen, I am exceedingly sorry to be under the necessity of descending to such minutiae, not more for the purpose of being perfectly understood; than to establish beyond the doubt of the most incredulous reader, the certainty of a *constantly increasing Poor*; as well as to introduce one of the many reasons for the advanced price of provisions, a circumstance equally unprecedented and alarming. For in these desolate dwellings, there are *now* none of those articles produced that I have already described; and upon enquiry at the different spots for the once contented and happy People that inhabited the house and
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fertilized the land; we find that some few are become *labourers* in the adjoining districts, and others wretchedly indigent receiving *alms* from the very PARISH RATE to which they formerly contributed. This well known fact, too firmly substantiated to doubt, too gloomy to enlarge upon, being submitted with all its various similitudes, probable inferences, and inevitable consequences to your consideration; I return to the great and powerful body of your enemies THE POACHERS, whose *recruiting parties* have been so amply supplied at all times, from that group of starvelings, (the necessitous laboring Poor) that I have so fully described.

But, My Lords and Gentlemen, just at this critical juncture, favored "AT ALL POINTS," as if my *own* Assertions were not of sufficient weight to attract your attention,
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and obtain your belief; the " Association for the Preservation of The Game, kindly and voluntarily step forward in my support, and enable me to lay before you, the copy of an Advertisement taken *verbatim* from a Public Newspaper bearing date, Nov. 10, 1792.

" GAME ASSOCIATION."

" The Noblemen and Gentlemen of the Association for the Preservation of THE GAME ALL OVER ENGLAND, are desired to meet at the house of William Devon in Red Lyon Square," (on five different days therein specified) " to consider of means for the better preservation of Game, and of carrying into execution the several statutes made for the punishment of POACHERS, and other unlawful destroyers thereof."

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My Lords and Gentlemen, this *awful Mountain in Labor*, this terrific denunciation of vengeance, this *sublime*, this *inimitable* Idea of "preserving the Game ALL OVER ENGLAND," by a meeting in *Red Lyon Square*, has something so truly laughable, so greatly ridiculous, and so admirably calculated to excite the risible emotions, that it requires some resolution to return *seriously* to an investigation of the subject before us. I have already in my prefatory address "lamented the degeneracy of the Times to prompt, and error in judgment to permit, the institution of A LAW in the BRITISH SENATE, merely to trumpet forth (in every corner of the Kingdom) its own imbecility." And I here appeal to the feelings of the most enlightened, as well as the most disinterested, whether such Advertisement, and from a channel so well informed and so truly authentic, (constituting within
itself

itself a criterion to decide by) is not an implied acknowledgment, a palpable confirmation from high Authority, of all the facts I have presumed to state for Parliamentary consideration. In *my humble conception*, it is the very "TRUMPET OF IMBECILITY," I had so forcibly predicted, that it totally precludes the necessity of farther demonstration; for it literally admits the insufficiency of the Laws, (in the difficulty of enforcing them); the unrestrained practices and unpunished depredations of the POACHERS; the unprecedented scarcity of The Game, and lastly the impending "ANNIHILATION." Having presumed to introduce thus much upon the *unparalleled power and excellence* of this institution, and adverting retrospectively to the fruitless efforts of the Association for a series of years, in their loudly proclaimed endeavours to oppose and suppress the predominant practice, and incredible

dible havock of their *Nocturnal Opponents*; more than a single prophetic addition will be unnecessary. Oppose the *cunning* of one, to the WISDOM of the other, and let Futurity proclaim the VICTORY.

My Lords and Gentlemen, it is an additional gratification, highly flattering to the original motive of this Representation, that just at the critical moment of conclusion, the following advertisement should find its way into the Public Papers under sanction of Official Authority, as if *intentionally* and most liberally introduced to corroborate my *Affertions* and confirm the FACTS.

“ Stamp Office, Reading, Berks. Nov. 17, 1792.”

“ His Majesty’s Commissioners of the Stamp Duties, having received positive information, that the Game Certificate Duty

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is greatly evaded in many parts of this County, have given directions that Prosecutions shall be commenced against all such who have attempted to evade the Law by omitting to take out proper Certificates. And in order to give effect to such enquiry, particular reference will be had to the List of all those who took out Certificates in the years, 1784, and 1785, and if it should be found that any person has killed, or destroyed Game, or endeavoured so to do this season, without taking out the Certificate required by Law, the penalties will be sued for forthwith, in the Court of Exchequer. And notice is hereby given, that from and after the 1st. of Dec. next (unless the proper Certificates are before that time taken out) the enquiry alluded to will immediately take place, and any information exhibited before a Magistrate of the County, or any suit instituted in any of his Majesty's

Majesty's Courts at Westminster, will be supported by his Majesty's Commissioners of the Stamp Duties; the Distributor of the Stamp Office, and the Deputy Clark of the Peace for the County, having received particular directions for that purpose."

Having taken the liberty to render such terrific Advertisement applicably subservient to my present purpose, it would prove the height of ingratitude to bury it in oblivion, without some few of the remarks, to which its sublimity of diction, and abstrusity of design is so eminently entitled. Whether those under whose official instruction it was promulgated, meant *most* to compliment the Abilities of the MINISTER in *proposing*; the WISDOM of PARLIAMENT in *confirming*; or the *self confessed* IMBECILITY of the LAWS they seem so strenuous to enforce I am yet to learn. But if I may

be permitted in such state of uncertainty to hazard an opinion, I must confess myself powerfully prompted to believe the Advertisement is most admirably calculated to excite and obtain an equal proportion of *indifference* and *contempt*, with the Laws that have occasioned it. To analyze, dissect and explain, the intent and effect of such Ministerial, or Official *menace*, would be only to go over the same ground, and to introduce the same proofs that have been so prophetically anticipated, and are now so *seriously* acknowledged from the very fountain-head of Authority. I shall therefore content myself with a contemptuous allusion, to the sterile Idea of "referring to the Lists of 1784, and 1785" (so *evidently* and *judiciously* reduced); thereby holding out a kind of compulsory injunction, that *it is expected* those who become dupes to so ineffectual a Law in the *first instance*, (for
reasons

reasons so fully and repeatedly explained) are to *renew their folly* in compliance with the Oppressive dictates of Official dignity, after they have most prudently emancipated themselves from the shackles of *Tyranny*, and founded their reformation and practice upon the basis of EQUITY and SELF PRESERVATION.

My Lords and Gentlemen, having expatiated upon proofs far beyond my original intention, it becomes perfectly in point to observe; if the Game is still an object worthy National Consideration, the present unprecedented destruction, and threatened annihilation must be *speedily averted* by such means of liberal accommodation to the Public, as may reconcile every Man's opinion to the common cause; promoting by an UNION OF INTERESTS, what it is palpably evident can never be effected by Official

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threats, or Ministerial compulsion. Every degree of information, every extent of experience for a series of years, must have convinced not only Parliament, but every rational Man in the Kingdom, that no diminution of POACHERS can be expected from *a dread of Punishment*; that Idea has proved too long delusive to be entitled to the most distant reflection. Having presumed to recommend to your attention such statement of FACTS as are beyond the power of confutation; it may perhaps be expected by some, I should premise or propose such remedy, as may at least mitigate symptoms, and soften the severity of disease. Whatever may be my own private opinion, (the effect of many years' observation and intercourse with the class of people, who consider themselves more immediately aggrieved by the letter and spirit of these Laws) it is impossible, I can assume dictatorial consequence

sequence sufficient to offer plans for adoption, in direct opposition to the combined wisdom and efforts of Parliament; whose conjoint decrees upon this subject have proved so NOTORIOUSLY INEFFECTUAL.

My Lords and Gentlemen, there can be little doubt but a disinterested Man, looking calmly into the present Laws, and their acknowledged effect in the destruction of Game, (totally divested of every personal consideration) would be induced to believe; the only probable means of retrieving the dreadfully reduced stock, would be to adopt one year of *general prohibition*, in which no Game *whatever* should be killed, but in such certain PRESERVED DISTRICTS, PARKS, DOMAINS, and by such persons as Parliament in its deliberations might deem it prudent or necessary to permit, and by such as are most likely to prevent deception.

The Game being with so slight a degree of *self denial* to the Sporting world thus increased, its preservation (or rather its support) becomes the secondary object of consideration; and confident I am, it must be evidently clear to every intelligent and enlightened observer, that no plan whatever can be so likely to reduce the number of POACHERS, or to restrain their power of depredation, as to *convert* the body of their numerous friends and abettors in every part of the Kingdom. This can only be effected by holding out such *fair, candid, and equitable* terms to the Public in general, as will render POACHING not only a service of danger, but of *no Emolument*, more particularly when *every Man* feels himself proportionally interested in the detection; and as the *effect* must gradually (if not totally) subside, as the excitement is taken away, there cannot be the least doubt entertained,

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but POACHING like many other things must inevitably decline, when there is *no cause* for encouragement to the practice.

My Lords and Gentlemen, before I take a final leave of the subject before us, it may not be inapplicable to observe for the information of the "Association for the Preservation of The Game ALL OVER ENGLAND," as well as the "Commissioners of his Majesty's Stamp Office;" how little assistance, they are at any time, likely to derive from the COUNTRY GENTLEMEN, either against the most desperate *well known Poachers*, or that multiplicity who so constantly make their excursions with a Gun but (in defiance of this terrible law) without A CERTIFICATE. These Gentlemen well know, that to carry into execution such Tyrannic injunctions they must encounter unpleasant and innumerable difficulties,

culties, and it is not readily to be believed that a MAGISTRATE possessing the inherent virtue of his Ancestors, with whose GENEROSITY and UNSULLIED HOSPITALITY the Village has for Ages resounded; and the affection of whose Friends, Tenants, Neighbours and Dependents, is his greatest glory: will hazard the foundation of such substantial, such HEART-FELT HAPPINESS, by *prosecuting*, or *persecuting* either, for the paltry consideration of PHEASANT,—HARE, or PARTRIDGE, in compliment to Parliamentary interdiction, when to the *whole breed of either*, he does not perhaps PERSONALLY annex the least intrinsic estimation.

My Lords and Gentlemen, would my present incessant engagements permit me to enlarge upon the subject to its utmost extent; much well founded matter might be urged

urged in favor of a Tax upon Dogs so universally courted, and so obstinately refused. This all classes agree would prove a Tax POPULAR, EQUITABLE, PERMANENT and EFFECTIVE; a Tax upon the consistency of which, every thing may be advanced, by those in the habits of observation, or general Association. It may be fairly concluded, that the Minister's objection to the adoption of a Tax, so publicly courted and unanimously approved, has arisen from an ill founded doubt of its becoming effective; and that he has supposed, or been taught to believe, the intent might be counteracted by a rapid destruction of the species, to avoid the payment of so EQUITABLE and OPTIONAL A TAX.

That some speedy executions might follow, (and with the greatest propriety) I readily admit; for we should then begin to feel

feel its good effect in part, by the much wished for destruction of those *village yelping Curs* that so incessantly assail and surprise the horses of unsuspecting Travellers, by which dreadful injuries have been sometimes sustained. Some few more predominant reasons might be likewise introduced, to justify the general utility of such Tax if adopted. As for instance the number of persons who constantly suffer from the bites of these Animals, and for a long time labor under that most dreadful anxiety and apprehension of the HYDROPHOBIA or Canine Madness : which certainly occurs more frequently than formerly, in consequence of the incredible increase of the most *useless* and *offensive* part of the Species. As well as the injury the Game may have annually sustained, by the babbling curs that constantly attend the labourers and their families to the Fields in the time of Hay-making and

and Harvest, to the certain destruction of birds unable to fly, or leverets to escape. Alluding once more to the before mentioned apprehension of *a general massacre*, I cannot afford room for the indulgence of so unnatural an Idea; nor will I condescend to think any human form capable of entertaining such a premeditated act of cruel resentment. But feeling for others as I feel myself, with a heart open to all the little tender assiduities that officiously present themselves to plead the cause of a faithful domestic unable to plead his own, I will not suppose it possible; rather submitting to the more generous dictates of humanity, that prompt me to believe, the very great majority of us are not so depraved as to become both judges and executioners where we know no crime, and put a period to the existence of those Animals, whose ATTACHMENT, FIDELITY and GRATITUDE, furnish.

nish most admirable lessons for even our own imitation.

My Lords and Gentlemen, I am sorry to be under the necessity of making confession, that from present discouraging appearances, and the obstinate inflexibility that seems annexed to the favourite penal system of these Laws, I have reason to believe every exertion ON THE PART OF THE PEOPLE will, from a want of MINISTERIAL FAVOR, DISINTERESTED PATRONAGE, or PATRIOTIC ASSISTANCE, be suffered to sink into its original obscurity. But My Lords and Gentlemen, I must be permitted to indulge an opinion, that had such an ACCUMULATION OF FACTS, such a chain of indisputable evidence arisen in another quarter, amidst that herd of *servile sycophants* that ever surround a MINISTER, the plan of reformation would have

have had very little opposition to encounter in the present period of FASHIONABLE PLIABILITY, when so much is (*without the least reluctance*) submitted to the INCREASING INFLUENCE OF THE CROWN, and so *little* to the *patient hopes* and *boasted Freedom* of THE PEOPLE.

